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An Analysis of the Educational Ideas of August C. Stellohorn: 1921-1963

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL IDEAS
OF AUGUST C. STELLHORN:
1921-1963

by
William C. Rietschel

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the School
of Education of Loyola University of Chicago
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PREFACE

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod is currently experiencing one of the most bitter struggles in its one hundred thirty-two year history. Some are of the opinion that the struggle is one of politics and power while others see the core of disagreement in theology. The author leans toward the latter position and believes that the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod is suffering a tremendous "identity crisis." The unanimity of doctrine and purpose is in a state of flux. The Missouri Synod is no longer clear on what it is nor what its mission should be.

It is the author's contention that the Missouri Synod's parochial school system might also fall prey to a similar "identity crisis." Consequently, he sees a need to illuminate further Lutheran educational history by focusing upon Lutheran education's unique origins. In this study, an understanding of Lutheran education's uniqueness was developed by examining the educational ideas of the Missouri Synod's first Secretary of Schools--Dr. August C. Stellhorn--whose career as a Lutheran educator provides a basis for a distinctively Lutheran educational perspective. Specifically, Stellhorn's concept of Lutheran educational history, the purposes of Lutheran education, the Lutheran school curriculum and educational methodology, and the Lutheran school teacher in ministry have been examined

against the backdrop of his Missouri Synod religious orientation.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify, discuss, and assess the educational ideas of August C. Stellhorn (1887-1964), a man who, as Secretary of Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod for nearly forty years, was an aggressive spokesman for the cause of Lutheran education. The study is limited to his writings as Secretary of Schools (1921-1960) and into his retirement terminating with his death in 1964. It is posited that Stellhorn's ideas were distinctively Lutheran, grounded solidly in orthodox Lutheran theology, and need to be examined in relationship to contemporary Lutheran education.

Having addressed the purpose and parameters of this study, we now turn to the method employed in the analysis of the educational ideas of Stellhorn during his tenure as Secretary of Schools and into his retirement.

The research used in this dissertation followed the historical method. That is, relevant primary and secondary sources were identified, and examined; evidence from them was used to develop the dissertation. The method was primarily documentary and non-empirical. The study relied on both August C. Stellhorn's published works--books, pamphlets, articles--and unpublished manuscript sources when they were available.

The purposes of this study were pursued through analysis of the following major sources.

1. The Stelhorn papers located at the Concordia Historical Institute in St. Louis, Missouri which contain many of his major addresses and essays.
2. The files of the Board for Parish Education of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod which contain other manuscript sources unavailable at the Concordia Historical Institute.
3. Stelhorn's books, especially Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and Manual for Lutheran Saturday-Schools, Summer-Schools, and Week-Day Religious Instruction, which provide much helpful information regarding his concept of Lutheran educational history and his perspective on the Lutheran school curriculum and educational methodology.
4. Stelhorn articles appeared in many of the journals of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Such publications as Advance, Board for Parish Education Bulletin, Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, Lutheran School Journal (later Lutheran Education), The Lutheran Witness, Parish Education, and The Walther League Messenger provide much of the Stelhorn educational perspective.
5. The News Service, a monthly bulletin which began

publication in January, 1923 under the editorship of Stellhorn and published by the Board of Parish Education of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod until 1947, contains much of the Stellhorn viewpoint regarding Lutheran education.

A critical analysis of the primary sources was made to extract the basic tenets of Stellhorn's educational thought, and the implications of their application to Lutheran educational history, purposes, curriculum and educational methodology, and the position of the teacher. Of special importance here is Stellhorn's theology which provided the springboard to understanding his educational dogma.

Secondary sources were used only minimally and principally for the biographical sketch where contemporaries of Stellhorn provided their perspective of him as a man and an administrator.

A review of the literature regarding August C. Stellhorn revealed a wealth of material, principally primary source material, pertaining to his educational perspective. From 1921 through 1963, Dr. Stellhorn published four books, one hundred ninety-eight articles which ranged from the mechanical teaching of religion to preventing colds in the classroom to the educational history of Missouri Synod Lutheranism in America. In addition, Stellhorn contributed two chapters to

yearbooks, at least one forward to a book, numerous pamphlets, and during the course of twenty-five years edited approximately three hundred issues of his monthly News Service bulletin.

The intent of the proposed study focused primarily on the educational ideas of August C. Stellanborn which have as their foundation his Missouri Synod religious orthodoxy. These ideas evolved throughout his tenure as Secretary of Schools for The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, including his concept of Lutheran educational history, his concept of the purposes of Lutheran education, his concept of the Lutheran school curriculum and educational methodology, and his concept of the Lutheran teacher in ministry.

As to the importance of this study, one can only view this within one's own frame of reference. This writer views Lutheran education in a state of flux, in great need of regaining its unique identity, and reconsecrating itself to the mission of the Church.

Throughout the history of religious education, thoughtful individuals have viewed the problems facing the institution at a particular time as critical. Today, as in the past, the Church needs the insights and reflections of intelligent individuals to assist in attempts at solving the fundamental problems confronting its educative agencies. These insights can come from the thoughtful contemplation of those that have gone before. It is hoped that this study of the educational ideas of August C. Stellanborn will assist The

Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod in respecting and understanding its past, make a small contribution toward sensitizing the Synod to some of the problems confronting its parochial schools today, and, thereby, provide the right and insight to improve on its heritage.

VITA

The author, William C. Rietschel, is the son of William Rietschel and Mary (Groh) Rietschel. He was born on August 16, 1942.

His elementary education was obtained in the public and Lutheran parochial schools of Chicago, Illinois and secondary education was completed at Luther High School-North from which he was graduated in June, 1960.

In September, 1960, he entered Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Illinois and in June, 1965 received the degree of Bachelor of Science with a major in elementary education and a minor in social science.

He was accepted in the Graduate School of Concordia Teachers College in the Summer Quarter of 1972 and in August, 1974 received the degree of Master of Arts in Education with an emphasis in Administration and Supervision.

The author has worked in Lutheran education since June, 1965 serving at both the elementary and collegiate levels. During his nine years at parish schools in New York City and Chicago, he worked in the varying capacities of Primary Grade teacher, Intermediate-Upper Grade teacher, and principal. In July, 1974 he joined the faculty of his alma mater, Concordia Teachers College, as Assistant Professor of Education. In addition to his teaching courses in

Foundations of Education, he has served the college as Assistant to the Director of Elementary Student Teaching and presently holds the position of Director of Placement.

He was accepted in the doctoral program in the School of Education at Loyola University in Chicago, Illinois in January, 1975 and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Education in January, 1980.

The author is married to the former Sharon L. Kuerschner of Watertown, Wisconsin. The marriage has been blessed with three daughters--Michelle, Lisa, and Kimberly.

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CHAPTER I

AUGUST C. STELLHORN: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

In 1958, six years before his death, August Stellhorn summarized his life as follows:

. . . I served as a teacher ten years, which work I wanted to continue all my life; but for the past forty years have done synodical work, first in a District, and then for the Synod. My lot in life has been to be pushed into something for which I was not ready and not fit So I had no business leaning on my own understanding, but to trust in the Lord for strength, insight, and guidance. If anything is clear to me after fifty years, it is the Biblical truth both as to family and office: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness." 2 Cor. 12:9. All glory alone to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and warmest thanks to countless people, near and far!¹

These simple lines, while perhaps reflecting Stellhorn's Christian humility, certainly do not do justice to a man who, as Secretary of Schools for The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod for nearly forty years, was a prominent spokesman for the cause of Lutheran education in the United States.

This chapter attempts to do justice to Dr. August C. Stellhorn through a biographical treatment. It will first treat Stellhorn's early years, the period covering

¹August C. Stellhorn, ed., "Fiftieth Anniversary, Class of 1908, Evangelical Lutheran Teachers Seminary, Addison, Illinois," booklet prepared for the fiftieth anniversary reunion of the 1908 class of Addison Lutheran Teachers Seminary in Detroit, Michigan, August 5-6, 1958 (Mimeographed), p. 58.

1887 to 1919, focusing on his boyhood, schooling, and first teaching positions. Next, will follow a discussion of Stellhorn as an administrator, first as Central District Superintendent of Schools and later as the first Secretary of Schools for The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. An overview of his literary activities proceeded by a view of Stellhorn as a family man will conclude the chapter.

August Joseph Conrad Stellhorn was born on June 2, 1887 in Horse Prairie (near Red Bud), Illinois. The Red Bud area, located in southwestern Illinois, was and still is a farming community approximately thirty miles southeast of downtown St. Louis, Missouri and approximately twenty miles due east of the Mississippi River. August was the second son of Henry F. and Caroline (Buch) Stellhorn. His father, the oldest child of Westphalian immigrants, took marriage vows on four different occasions, "losing his first three wives in quick succession."² Caroline was Henry's third partner (married in 1883) and bore him two other children--Caroline, August's older sister, who died at age five and Arthur, August's younger brother, who died in 1939.³

August's mother died young in 1893 and it befell Henry Stellhorn's fourth spouse, Wilhelmina (Rowold), to raise August and the rest of the Stellhorn brood on their farm outside of Horse Prairie. She evidently handled this

²Ibid., p. 52.

³Ibid.

task with considerable competence as August commented that Wilhelmina was "a superb mother to all of us."⁴

One would guess that August's father was somewhat more influential upon him than was his stepmother. In the area of schooling, for example, the fact that his father had attended the first St. Louis Lutheran High School at age 18 and served a one year term as a primary teacher for the local parochial school must have had some influence upon young August. Arthur, August's younger brother, also became a teacher.⁵

August's later interest in music was probably also cultivated by his father who played the melodeon, "had his own neighborhood choir, did part-singing with his children (as his father had done), . . . sang tenor in a male chorus, played cornet in a band, served as emergency organist in church," and led his congregation in singing for some years as a "Vorsaenger" (singing leader). The latter resulted in much hymn singing on the part of all the Stelhorn children each Saturday night and Sunday morning in preparation for the church service.⁶

Stelhorn wrote that generally his parents "were serious-minded Christians, kind but very strict, intimate with us in our maturer years, and honor-compelling to

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

everyone of us to the last."⁷ Adalbert, Stellhorn's oldest son, speculates that cautiousness, thoroughness and thoughtfulness might also be a good description of the home climate established by Henry and Wilhelmina.⁸

It is intriguing to note that for such an aggressive spokesman as August Stellhorn was for Lutheran parochial education, his first formal schooling experience was in a public school near the home of his natural mother's parents. August had been sent there to stay during the winter months following her death in 1893.⁹ This was not to be his only contact with secular schooling, for after his confirmation in April of 1900, August again "attended public school for short winter terms."¹⁰ Surprisingly, Stellhorn credits a "very good male public-school teacher" with priming him for a career in teaching.¹¹ In this same vein, Stellhorn made the first of a lifetime of original speeches as salutatorian for his eighth grade commencement from the County Public School.

Except for a total of five short terms in public schools, the majority (six years) of his formal elementary

⁷Ibid.

⁸Adalbert H. Stellhorn, August C. Stellhorn's oldest son, to William C. Rietschel, Sepulveda, California 25 September 1977, Personal Files of William C. Rietschel, Oak Park, Illinois.

⁹Stellhorn, "Fiftieth Anniversary," p. 52.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 53.

¹¹Ibid.

schooling was received at Trinity Lutheran School in Horse Prairie, Illinois. Beyond the fact that Trinity was a Missouri Synod parish school, Stellhorn wrote little of his parochial education. He did comment once that his teacher at this school "was a fine Christian gentleman, who wrote a beautiful hand, but had his weaknesses in discipline and English."¹²

While Stellhorn had received some pressure to enter the Lutheran ministry from his pastor, some schoolmates, and several relatives,¹³ his "early ambitions tended to be in the direction of poultry raising."¹⁴ He learned of the Lutheran Teachers Seminary at Addison, Illinois (now Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Illinois) quite by accident.¹⁵ As Stellhorn told it:

During the Christmas holidays in 1903, a sulky passed our house which I recognized as that of Mrs. Ernst

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴"A. C. Stellhorn, Twenty-Five Years to the Parish School," The Lutheran Witness 65 (April 1946): 146.

¹⁵The Lutheran Teachers Seminary was established at Addison, Illinois in September, 1864 for the purpose of training teachers for the schools of The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States (now The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod). At its inception, the Seminary offered three preparatory years (e.g., academy) and two seminary years (e.g., normal school). This five year course was still in existence during the years that Stellhorn was in attendance. In fact, the academic year following Stellhorn's graduation in 1908, the Seminary added a sixth year and the program then consisted of three preparatory years and three seminary years. The Seminary was moved to River Forest, Illinois in the Fall of 1913.

Hitzemann, my stepmother's aunt; but I did not recognize the driver. "That," my mother said, "is Adalbert Hitzemann, oldest son of Rev. Wm. Hitzemann of Minnesota, Papa's closest friend." Asked what he was doing, she replied: "He is a student near Chicago, at a place called Madison or Addison, or something like that; he wants to be a Lutheran teacher." "What!" I ejaculated, "can one study to be a Lutheran teacher?" "I don't know," she answered, "but I think that is what my aunt said."¹⁶

September, 1904 found Stellhorn at the Lutheran Teachers Seminary in Addison, Illinois carrying with him his father's admonition that he did not want young August to fail and that "Once you put your hand to the plow, you do not turn back."¹⁷ August was able to skip the lowest of the three preparatory classes at Addison "on the strength of an entrance examination."¹⁸

Stellhorn immediately dove into his studies finding that he had deficiencies in "declinations of nouns and conjugations of verbs in German," "reasoning" in arithmetic, and note values, rests, and counting in music. In spite of these admitted weaknesses, Stellhorn wrote:

. . . I thoroughly enjoyed my studies, worked at them conscientiously, and felt I was learning a great deal. Often did more than was required. Most of all, I appreciated our thorough indoctrination and the wonderful Bible lessons by Prof. F. Lindemann. But I also enjoyed and marveled at the fine music I heard from professors and students (was once chased out of the devotion room by a senior for hiding behind the big square piano and listening to his organ playing - Bach's

¹⁶Stellhorn, "Fiftieth Anniversary," p. 53.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸William A. Kramer, "Doctor August C. Stellhorn," Parish Education 26 (September 1948): 100.

G- Minor Fugue, which I later played at our final examination).¹⁹

With the exception of Lindemann, Stellhorn appears not to have commented on his other instructors at Addison. We can assume that he came under the additional influence of the following faculty members during his tenure at the Seminary: E. A. W. Krauss, Theodore Brohm, Ernst Homann, J. L. Backhaus, Friedrich Koenig, Friedrich Rechlin, G. C. Albert Kaepfel, Albert H. Miller, and Ferdinand H. Schmitt. The four years that Stellhorn spent at the Teachers Seminary were equivalent to two years of preparatory (e.g., academy) schooling and two years of a college (e.g., normal school) education. His graduation on June 15, 1908 marked the end to the formal schooling of August C. Stellhorn.

Forty years later, on June 20, 1948, Valparaiso University conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Education (Ed. D.) upon Stellhorn in recognition of his "work in behalf of Christian education in general, but particularly for his work in promoting Lutheran schools for more than a quarter century."²⁰

After his graduation in 1908, Stellhorn took his position behind, rather than in front of, the teacher's desk. His first teaching position ("call" in Lutheran parlance) was to St. John Lutheran School, Red Bud,

¹⁹Stellhorn, "Fiftieth Anniversary," p. 54.

²⁰Kramer, "Doctor August C. Stellhorn," p. 100.

Illinois. Lest there be an accusation of nepotism, the reader should understand that this was not Stellhorn's home congregation, but one that was nearby. The congregation (established in 1855) and the school (established in 1868) are still in existence today maintaining a program of Christian education for approximately one hundred fifty youngsters.

August Stellhorn was officially installed into the service of the Church on August 2, 1908. He remained at St. John's for a little over three years teaching the four upper grades with an approximate yearly enrollment of about seventy students in the four classes. In addition, Stellhorn served the congregation as organist and choir director. For these services he received \$400.00 per year (raised to \$500.00 after his marriage in 1909) plus a house in which to reside.²¹

Little else is known of Stellhorn's first teaching position except that it was during his tenure at Red Bud that he presented the first of what was to be many conference papers. Evidently, it was the opening or keynote address at the Randolph, Monroe, and Jackson County Mixed Conference. The address was apparently well-received for there seemed to be a movement to have it published. Unfortunately, Stellhorn angered the conference chairman by

²¹Stellhorn, "Fiftieth Anniversary," p. 54.

continually objecting to having it published!²²

Early in the Fall of 1911, Stellhorn accepted a call to serve the parish and school of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Indianapolis, Indiana. Once again, he functioned in a dual role--teacher plus organist and choir director. St. Paul had a four room school of one hundred twelve students. Stellhorn initially was to teach grades 3 and 4, but eight months later was shifted to grades 7 and 8.²³

It was not long until Stellhorn's interest in many facets of Christian education and in music led to the assignment of a number of conference papers, some of which were published in the Evangelisches Lutherisches Schulblatt (later Lutheran School Journal and now Lutheran Education) and in Der Lutheraner. Recognition of his ability drew more attention to him and in August, 1918 he read the first part of an essay on schools at the Central District Convention of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.²⁴ This was not just

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 55.

²⁴The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod was founded in 1847 by a group of Saxon immigrants who earlier (1839) had settled in Perry County and St. Louis, Missouri; a group of Bavarians in and near Frankenmuth, Michigan; and Lutherans in Ohio and other states. These various groups had engaged in discussions and found a theological consensus among themselves. From sixteen congregations (all with elementary schools) in 1847, the Synod has grown to 6,160 congregations, 1,218 elementary schools, thirty-nine secondary schools, and sixteen colleges and seminaries in North America at this writing.

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod has traditionally been one of the most orthodox Lutheran

a teachers conference, but the organized body politic of all Missouri Synod Lutherans in Indiana and Ohio at that time. As we shall soon see, this Central District Convention also was the turning point in Stellhorn's career. The essay, which was completed at the 1919 Central District Convention and later published in the Convention Proceedings, discussed the factors necessary for the welfare of Lutheran parochial schools and was entitled, "Under What Conditions Can We Expect the Blessed Continuation of Our School System." Stellhorn described the experience as follows:

Never have I sweated and prayed more fervently over anything else, and when I was called upon to present the first section (which I had completely re-worked the night before), I shook with fear. But the Lord had mercy upon me. Not only was I composed after I had started reading, but the section was well received (to my great surprise).²⁵

Available sources make it rather difficult to speculate on Stellhorn's role as a classroom teacher for the the ten years in which he served in that capacity. However, Arthur C. Repp, an associate of Stellhorn for several years, provides a clue when he writes that Stellhorn:

denominations in the United States. This orthodoxy will be treated in conjunction with Stellhorn's religious orientation in the second chapter of this study.

The Synod is composed of congregations who voluntarily join, but who maintain their individual autonomy. For administrative purposes, the Synod is broken up into geographical districts (e.g., Northern Illinois, Atlantic, etc.). These districts, in turn, are separated into circuits within a still more limited geographical area.

²⁵Stellhorn, "Fiftieth Anniversary," p. 56.

. . . could not tolerate a babble of voices in a classroom, even when the children were working on a mutual task. I used to tease him by saying that the only place as quiet as he imagined a classroom should be was the local cemetery.²⁶

At any rate, November 8, 1918 marked the end of Stellsborn's career as a Lutheran classroom teacher and the beginning of "something for which he was not ready and not fit."

Around the turn of the century, there was beginning to be a concern within the Missouri Synod for closer supervision or inspection of Lutheran schools to promote greater coordination and to raise standards. This concern was premised, in part, upon the fear that enemies of parochial education would capitalize on weaknesses in the schools. Then too, enrollment in Lutheran schools at this time was not keeping pace with the growth of the Synod as a whole and it was felt that a contributing factor to this tendency was a lack of systematic supervision as well as lack of coordination of efforts. This concern reached fruition on October 1, 1918 when the Northern Illinois District of the Missouri Synod established the first District Superintendent of Schools position. The Michigan District quickly followed with the Central District (Indiana and Ohio) a close third.

While Stellsborn was laboring over and presenting the

²⁶Arthur C. Repp, The Missouri Synod's first Executive Secretary of the Board for Parish Education (1943-1945), to William C. Rietschel, St. Louis, Missouri, 26 September 1977, Personal Files of William C. Rietschel, Oak Park, Illinois.

first part of his essay regarding "Under What Conditions Can We Expect the Blessed Continuation of Our School System" at the August 7-13, 1918 Central District Convention, a floor committee of that same body was recommending the establishment of the position of District Superintendent who was to be chosen by the convention. In spite of his arguments to the contrary (e.g., youth, inexperience, small children, and draft status), August C. Stellhorn was elected Central District School Superintendent on August 13, 1918, the closing day of the convention.²⁷ Since the superintendent was to be in charge chiefly of the schools, the teachers, who to this day ordinarily do not vote at either Synodical or District conventions, were given the vote in Stellhorn's selection. Years later, Stellhorn wrote:

I was never more shocked in my life, nor more afraid. When I came home, my wife cried bitter tears, and they were not tears of joy or pride. We had teachers up to 55 years in office; most teachers were older than I, and the district was very large. Nobody knew what a superintendent should do, except that he was to work in the interest of the schools. Even a special committee of officials was at sea, laid down a few imaginary rules, and told me to find my own way.²⁸

For all this uncertainty, Stellhorn was to receive \$1,500.00 plus expenses annually, which in those days (and especially for the Missouri Synod) was a considerable sum.²⁹

²⁷Stellhorn, "Fiftieth Anniversary," p. 56.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹August C. Stellhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church

It did not take long for Stellhorn to define his new position. Basically, he saw as his primary business the promotion of the District's parochial school system and, indirectly, that of the Synod.³⁰ To this end, during his two years and five months (December 8, 1918 to April 5, 1921) as Central District Superintendent, Stellhorn:

. . . thoroughly explored the school situation, helped to improve beginning reading, the teaching of language, methods in religion, penmanship, history, and geography; classified the schools, published an outline course of study, worked for the introduction of good textbooks, got the teachers a life certificate in Indiana, called the first District Teachers Conference, had a rough time in the Legislatures of Indiana and Ohio, took part in establishing the General School Conference of the Synod, and in organizing the Superintendents Conference³¹

The purpose of all this was

. . . to improve the individual school and, in that school, the individual teacher, or to acknowledge the already efficient condition of school and teacher; then to launch out and expand the school system by the opening of additional schools. Included was also the protection or defense of the schools against dangers from within the church.³²

Stellhorn believed that "the most effective work" he did as Central District Superintendent was "in eye-to-eye, extremely frank and confidential discussions with teachers after visiting their classes, and in discussions with

- Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), p. 292.

³⁰Ibid., p. 298.

³¹Stellhorn, "Fiftieth Anniversary," p. 56.

³²Stellhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 293.

pastors and local boards."³³

The discussions with teachers followed Stellhorn's visit to the classroom and would focus on "everything that had been observed, not only the instruction, methods, textbooks, course of study, weekly schedule, and the like, but also the room and its appointments, furniture, equipment, temperature, ventilation, and other external matters."³⁴ Stellhorn would conduct these post-observation conferences by first pointing out "desirable features" followed by constructive criticism and finally answer questions directed to him by the teacher who had been observed.³⁵

After the school visitation and confidential conference with the teacher(s), Stellhorn "met with the local parish school board, the teacher or teachers, and the pastor to discuss numerous things not of a confidential nature. He carried with him a rather extensive information blank, which was filled out and discussed" during the meeting. "Later he would write the congregation a letter, reporting on his visit in general and making such recommendations as had been agreed upon by the board and

³³Stellhorn, "Fiftieth Anniversary," p. 56.

³⁴Stellhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 293.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 293-294.

faculty."³⁶

It should be noted that it was during Stellhorn's Central District Superintendency that, while confronting problems of Christian education and searching for possible solutions, he developed a strong interest in history. He was petitioned by the State Librarian to write an article on "Lutheranism in Indiana" for the Indiana Magazine of History.³⁷

The school superintendency of the Central District provided Stellhorn with an excellent orientation in school administration and supervision. In 1920, the Missouri Synod authorized its General School Board to call a full-time Secretary of Schools for the entire Synod and in March, 1921 Stellhorn was elected to the office after the Board's initial choice declined to serve. Once again, he experienced some serious misgivings premised upon the following: (1) a feeling of being unequal to the task; (2) his love of the Central District and the fact that he was in office only a little more than two years; (3) the fact that this new position was again uncharted and untried; and (4) that Lutheran schools were in critical straits being "assailed from without and undermined from within."³⁸ The assailants "from without" as Stellhorn viewed them were:

³⁶Ibid., p. 294.

³⁷Kramer, "Doctor August C. Stellhorn," p. 100.

³⁸Stellhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 299

. . . certain misguided and misinformed citizens who, during and after World War I, if not prior to it, developed an unprecedented bitterness and hatred against all languages other than the English language and all schools other than the public schools, and as individuals or members of organizations worked toward legislation that would prohibit foreign languages and abolish private and parochial schools.³⁹

One can speculate that the "Americanization" view toward immigration with its belief in the superiority of the so-called "Anglo-Saxon" culture prevalent in the United States during the late 1800's and early 1900's contributed significantly to Stellhorn's observation.

Walter H. Beck, Stellhorn's predecessor as a Lutheran educational historian, lends support to the first Secretary's "assailant" interpretation when he states that the movement to abolish foreign languages began before the outbreak of the war; that by 1913 seventeen states had already adopted laws which required English as the only medium of instruction in the public elementary schools, and that, during and immediately after the war, some twenty-one states enacted such legislation in regard to private and parochial schools as well as public schools.⁴⁰ Specifically, Beck summarized the anti-German sentiment as follows:

Propaganda had aroused the antipathies of the nation

³⁹Ibid., p. 313.

⁴⁰Walter H. Beck, Lutheran Elementary Schools in the United States (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1939), p. 326.

against anything and all that sounded German in name or reflected German customs and origins. If the sentiment against German was so strong that orchestras and opera associations did not dare play the works of such beloved German masters as Wagner, Beethoven, and Brahms, and that German artists previously hailed with loud acclaim would not dare to appear in public programs, it is evident that the use of the language itself in home, business houses, churches, and schools became anathema to certain types of Americans, whose agitations finally resulted in the adoption of various measures for the purpose of outlawing or at least curtailing the German language. The attempts to stamp out German as well as other languages included the prohibition of foreign-language publications, the prohibition or restriction of foreign languages in public religious services, legislation forbidding the teaching of foreign languages in grammar and high schools, and finally the attempts to suppress parochial schools.⁴¹

On the other hand, the undermining "from within," as Stellschorn viewed it, came from congregations which "had only a Sunday School and a meager preparation of the children for confirmation. Far too many had only a Saturday or summer school. In all such cases, children were sent to public schools for their general education. Still far too many pastors were teaching a regular school, some of them fewer than five days a week."⁴² Of all of these, Stellschorn's greatest fear was the Sunday School. Arthur C. Repp, the Missouri Synod's first Executive Secretary of the Board for Parish Education, and from 1943 to 1945 Stellschorn's superior, writes that Stellschorn "was deeply opposed to Sunday Schools under any circumstances. As far as I know he

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 324-325.

⁴²Stellschorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 305.

never really mellowed on them."⁴³ This antagonism is further manifested in a quote of Stellhorn from the Minutes of the School Board Bulletin, October 20, 1924:

The question is not whether the institution [Sunday School] demands so many lay teachers, but whether we want to tolerate the institution that demands such wholesale teaching by lay members These same lay people would never be permitted to teach in a day school, unless perhaps in exceptional cases.⁴⁴

Another close associate writes that Stellhorn "believed the Sunday School to be so inadequate that it was at best a very inferior agency" and he does not think Stellhorn sent his children to it.⁴⁵

In spite of his serious misgivings, Stellhorn accepted the call of the Synod's General School Board to serve as its Secretary on April 5, 1921 and developed a simple strategy for his office. Just as with the Central District Superintendency, he saw the main work of his new position as saving and promoting the Lutheran school system. To this end, Stellhorn began a promotional effort in the Missouri Synod that was directed "against all makeshift, short-changing education of the youth and toward the

⁴³Repp to Rietschel, 28 September 1977.

⁴⁴Alan Graebner, Uncertain Saints: The Laity in The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, 1900-1970 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975), pp. 90-91.

⁴⁵William A. Kramer, Associate Secretary of Schools for the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (1940-1960) and Stellhorn's successor as Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Schools for the Synod (1961-1970), to William C. Rietschel, St. Louis, Missouri, 11 October 1977, Personal Files of William C. Rietschel, Oak Park, Illinois.

historic ideal of regular parish schools."⁴⁶ Basically, this strategy was adhered to throughout the nearly forty years that Stellhorn served as Secretary of Schools.

When Stellhorn became Secretary of Schools, the work of Christian education was not organized under one Board as it is today under the Board for Parish Education. There was a General School Board, to which the Secretary of Schools was responsible. Then there was the Sunday School Committee, which worked independently. Much pioneering work needed to be done. From the beginning, Stellhorn advocated the amalgamation of the two groups under one board, but it was not until 1929 before this finally occurred.

While Secretary of Schools, Stellhorn saw the Missouri Synod more than double its communicant membership. He saw the country pass through two depressions, two periods of great prosperity, World War II and the Korean conflict. During the twenties he saw a great increase in schools and enrollment, during the thirties a considerable decrease due to the depression and other factors (some said it was Stellhorn's efforts that saved the Lutheran schools during the Depression), and during the late forties and fifties he witnessed a remarkable renewal of interest in Lutheran education which resulted in much larger enrollments in the parochial schools and in all other agencies of Christian education. In 1958, two years before his retirement,

⁴⁶Stellhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 305.

Stellhorn proudly noted that "During the past ten years . . . we had a net gain of 200 schools, 1,971 classrooms (teachers), 52,763 pupils--actually quite a school system in itself, larger than other systems."⁴⁷ If we compare the pupil increase of 17,000 plus pupils during the 1940-1948 period, we can understand Stellhorn's pride. Add to this the fact that Stellhorn "did not expect to live long enough to see the day of such expansion"⁴⁸

There were times in which determined political efforts were made to kill parochial schools through unfavorable legislation. As Secretary of Schools, Stellhorn was active in the successful fight against this legislation. He served as a member of the National Committee, and of its Executive Committee, against the Child Labor Amendment, from 1934 to 1944. He continually favored Lutheran secondary education. Serving on the Synodical Survey Committee in the early 1920's, he initiated its recommendation of general higher education and the establishment of Lutheran high schools. While still living in Indianapolis, he advocated a Lutheran high school there. Though this project never materialized, the growth of Lutheran secondary education following World War II brought genuine satisfaction to him.

In addition to the above, Stellhorn's tenure as Secretary of Schools included meetings with various

⁴⁷Stellhorn, "Fiftieth Anniversary," p. 57.

⁴⁸Ibid.

Synodical District boards in behalf of an aggressive promotional program for Lutheran education, advocacy of the District superintendency, which is now an accomplished fact in most Missouri Synod Districts, advocacy of the Synodical Office of Executive Secretary of Christian Education, which materialized in 1943 when Arthur C. Repp assumed the new office, inauguration of the Educational Conference (a national Lutheran teachers conference now known as the Lutheran Education Association), the organization of a textbook committee chosen from the Superintendents Conference, and inauguration of the annual School Reference Catalog published in connection with the General Catalog of the Synod's Concordia Publishing House. Finally, Stellsborn was instrumental in the formation of the Synodical Teachers Bureau. In 1945 the Missouri Synod's College of Presidents established the Bureau and connected it with Stellsborn's office. The Teachers Bureau collected and compiled statistical and other information about the teachers of the Missouri Synod to assist both the teachers and the congregations which call teachers. During its first year of existence, the Bureau reclaimed over forty teachers who were out of office for service in the Church.⁴⁹

There seems to be some divergency of opinion on Stellsborn as an administrator. His secretary, Miss Lenore Harms, who was associated with Stellsborn in the Board for

⁴⁹Kramer, "Doctor August C. Stellsborn," p. 101.

Parish Education office in St. Louis from 1950 until his retirement in 1960, found him to be "most meticulous" and thorough as an administrator.⁵⁰ Arthur L. Miller, who followed Arthur C. Repp as Executive Secretary of the Board for Parish Education and who served as Stellhorn's superior in that position from 1946 to Stellhorn's retirement supports Miss Harms when he states that Stellhorn "showed himself an efficient administrator."⁵¹ Probably the best single source available to comment on Stellhorn as an administrator is Dr. William A. Kramer, who worked as Stellhorn's assistant and in his shadow for nearly twenty years and who assumed Stellhorn's position upon his retirement. Kramer writes that:

If Stellhorn had been an administrator in today's sense, he would likely have been a meticulous one. He was not careless about things He was meticulous about . . . his work. When he read, he read slowly with great emphasis on detail He did not work best under pressure, whether administrative or any other Stellhorn worked best by himself, and I am probably not wrong in saying that administration was not his forte, neither with respect to secretaries nor other fellow workers.

However, when the work of fellow workers came across his desk, Stellhorn was meticulous. He himself had a way of speaking and writing clearly, and he expected others to do so. He would handle another person's

⁵⁰Lenore M. Harms, August C. Stellhorn's secretary (1950-1960), to William C. Rietschel, St. Louis, Missouri, 28 September 1977, Personal Files of William C. Rietschel, Oak Park, Illinois.

⁵¹Arthur L. Miller, The Missouri Synod's second Executive Secretary of the Board for Parish Education (1946-1972), to William C. Rietschel, St. Louis, Missouri, 29 September 1977, Personal Files of William C. Rietschel, Oak Park, Illinois.

written work like the schoolmaster who marks every detail. He worked slowly and meticulously, and he liked for others to be meticulous. However, his tendency to work things out by himself rather than through a give-and-take situation left some administrative loose ends.⁵²

Since each of the above sources was close to Stellhorn, it can be assumed that such descriptions as "meticulous," "efficient," and "thorough" are relatively accurate in describing his administrative style. As we shall see later, they also indicate the approach he took as the head of his household.

Perhaps consistent with his administrative style is the personality he projected as a man. Lenore Harms, his secretary, confides that initially Stellhorn "gave me the impression that he was somewhat severe; after a short conversation it was easy to find him a sincere and understanding person."⁵³ Arthur Miller found him to be "a gentleman--kind, courteous, helpful."⁵⁴ Arthur Repp observes that Stellhorn "did not readily invite intimacy. Many thought him to be cold and proud, a Prussian by nature," but believes that this view of the Secretary was somewhat "overdrawn."⁵⁵ Kramer, because of his close and lengthy association with Stellhorn, again serves as our most reliable commentator on his personality. He writes

⁵²Kramer to Rietschel, 11 October 1977.

⁵³Harms to Rietschel, 28 September 1977.

⁵⁴Miller to Rietschel, 29 September 1977.

⁵⁵Repp to Rietschel, 28 September 1977.

that:

Stellhorn was dignified and sedate, and he expected respect. I think he also inspired respect in people who may not otherwise have warmed up to him At the lunch table . . . Stellhorn was always a gentleman, and he probably thought at times that some of the rest of us were frivolous. That was his way. He was serious about almost everything and he did not always see the humor in situations that others saw. Yet he could joke at times.⁵⁶

Kramer continues with the observation that

. . . the Law sometimes got the best of Dr. Stellhorn Yet I must say that he was never unkind in my presence. But he had strong convictions and did not mind expressing them [I]n some ways he seemed above others or aloof [but] I don't think that he was cold.⁵⁷

As can be seen, Stellhorn assumed and carried out his administrative duties with a high level of commitment and energy. These same characteristics manifested themselves in his writing.

Stellhorn's literary activities covered a wide range. In fact, even to describe him as a prolific writer has a tinge of understatement. Conference papers and District convention essays amount to an impressive total during his tenure as Secretary of Schools. One of the more ambitious projects undertaken by him was the revision of the Bobbs - Merrill Readers in 1925 and 1926, in which several teachers cooperated on a part-time basis. The Bobbs - Merrill Readers were a complete series of readers for grades one to eight, published by the Bobbs-Merrill

⁵⁶Kramer to Rietschel, 11 October 1977.

⁵⁷Ibid.

Company. The books were prepared for use in Lutheran schools through the revision of many selections contained in them, and through a substitution of many selections of a distinctively Christian or Lutheran character.

Among other publications of Stellsborn must be listed The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, originally read as a District Convention essay, and other tracts; compilation of the Elementary Bible History in the early 1920's in cooperation with Professor Theodore Kuehnert of Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Illinois; work on the first Music Reader for Lutheran Schools, in cooperation with others from about 1932 to 1934; the Manual for Lutheran Saturday-Schools, Summer-Schools, and Week-Day Religious Instruction in 1935; compilation of the Advanced Bible History in 1936; regular "Messages to Teachers" (covering topics ranging from dangerous history textbooks to preventing colds in the classroom) in the Lutheran School Journal (later Lutheran Education) over a period of years; biographies and other historical articles for the Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly (Stellsborn served on the Institute's Board of Governors for many years); a major series of ten historical articles entitled "The Saxon Centennial and the Schools" in the Lutheran School Journal (now Lutheran Education) for the Missouri Synod's centennial year of 1939; and other articles and papers too numerous to mention, but that may be found in such Synodical periodicals as Advance, Board

for Parish Education Bulletin, The Lutheran Witness, and Parish Education. There were few periodicals in the Missouri Synod that did not publish some article from his pen.

The publication that was perhaps nearest to the heart of the Synod's first Secretary of Schools was the News Service, which was published from January, 1923, to December, 1947, a period of twenty-five years. This publication was then enlarged into Parish Education and made to cover the entire program of Parish education, where the News Service had been devoted chiefly to the promotion of Lutheran elementary schools. The News Service began as a mimeographed bulletin for District boards and officials of Synod. It kept them informed on dangerous legislation, brought news from the school field, and provided guidance for the promotion of Lutheran schools. Later the publication was planographed and sent free to all pastors and teachers of Synod. During the first six years of its publication, it was reprinted in full in the Lutheran School Journal. The News Service files contain many a helpful article, many a thoughtful analysis of the educational situation, and many an inspiring report of progress in Christian education.

Stellhorn's literary activity shifted its focus from a heavy promotional emphasis during his early years as Secretary to an emphasis on Lutheran educational history during his later years and into his retirement. This is

supported by his writing of the opening chapter, entitled "The Period of Organization, 1838-1847," for the 1947 Lutheran Education Association Yearbook, 100 Years of Christian Education. Nine years later Stellhorn published his History of the Superintendents Conference: Supervision and Promotion of Christian Education by The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. But Stellhorn's crowning achievement as a Lutheran educational historian must remain his Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, a meticulous, detailed, and encyclopaedic chronological history of Lutheran education in America by quarter centuries. Throughout the text, Stellhorn frequently discloses his intimate personal involvement in the making of Lutheran educational history as well as a parochial celebrationism similar to that of Cubberley and Monroe's handling of the evolution of American public education. According to Stellhorn's eldest son, Adalbert, "of all the projects that came his way, the writing of this book caused him the greatest concerns."⁵⁸ In spite of these concerns, Stellhorn put his hands to the plow and did not turn back. The history was published in 1963 and was his culminating contribution to the Missouri Synod. He died a year later.

A year after his graduation from the Addison Seminary, on July 14, 1909, Stellhorn married Amanda M. Schumacher of Watertown, Wisconsin. She was a sister of

⁵⁸Adalbert H. Stellhorn to Rietschel, 25 September 1977.

Bernhard Schumacher, who from 1924 to 1960 was Superintendent of Schools for the South Wisconsin District of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. In fact, Bernhard and August married their respective spouses in a double wedding ceremony in 1909.

The marriage was blessed with five children: Adalbert (1910), Olga (1912), Martin (1914), Luella (1920), and August, Jr. (1924). The three sons each graduated from Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Illinois and each served the Missouri Synod as a classroom teacher. Adalbert is now retired and living in California; Martin earned a doctorate and is presently a Professor of Music at Arizona State University; August, Jr. died in 1976. Neither of Stellhorn's daughters ever married. Both worked as secretaries for many years; Olga with her father for a number of years. Luella died in 1972 and Olga still resides in St. Louis.

Martin remembers home relationships as being very close in spite of the considerable amount of traveling his father had to do first as District Superintendent and later as Secretary of Schools. When Stellhorn returned from these trips, there was usually a thorough review for the family at the dinner table.⁵⁹ Family worship was also an integral component in the Stellhorn home as each evening the family

⁵⁹Martin H. Stellhorn, August C. Stellhorn's son, to William C. Rietschel, Tempe, Arizona, 1 October 1977, Personal Files of William C. Rietschel, Oak Park, Illinois.

"participated in Bible readings and listened to the explanations of Scripture passages."⁶⁰

One of the most prominent features of the Stellhorn home was music. Even after leaving parish service, Stellhorn continued composing and arranging and "even played organ for devotions at the Lutheran Building in St. Louis near his retirement."⁶¹ Piano duets with Amanda and later with his three sons were commonplace.⁶² All the children were encouraged to take music lessons, the family attended many orchestral and choral concerts, and over the years the Stellsorns accumulated a large record library.⁶³ In good Lutheran musical tradition, Bach was Stellhorn's ranking composer both to be listened to as well as performed.

Evidently, the impact of Stellhorn's musical influence upon his children was similar to what he had experienced as a child. By his own admission, "he did not so much teach his children music as to let them absorb it in the home."⁶⁴ Regardless, the results were impressive. The three sons were outstanding musicians, and all of them served (like their father) as organists and choir conductors in Lutheran churches. Martin, especially, has reached a

⁶⁰Adalbert H. Stellhorn to Rietschel, 25 September 1977.

⁶¹Martin H. Stellhorn to Rietschel, 1 October 1977.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Kramer to Rietschel, 11 October 1977.

particularly high level having, after eight years in Missouri Synod elementary schools, taught and served as dean at the St. Louis Institute of Music, earned a Ph. D. in music, and (as already mentioned) now teaches in the music department at Arizona State University. He has also published a number of musical compositions. The daughters, Olga and Luella, while not achieving the competency of their brothers, both apparently maintained an interest in music.⁶⁵

In addition to music, Stellhorn maintained other hobbies or interests. He knew trees and plant life and Adalbert remembers taking many walks with his father where he was "alerted to the flora and fauna" of the area followed by a rehearsing of the names of plants and trees.⁶⁶ Other Stellhorn interests were family history, clock repair, carpentry, and portrait and landscape painting.⁶⁷

An attempt to assess the overall climate of the Stellhorn household is difficult, but one receives the impression that the meticulousness and care that manifested itself in Stellhorn as an administrator also permeated Stellhorn as a family man. Adalbert writes:

⁶⁵William A. Kramer, Associate Secretary of Schools for The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (1940-1950) and Stellhorn's successor as Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Schools for the Synod (1961-1970), to Dr. Al H. Senske, St. Louis, Missouri, 4 February 1977, Personal Files of William C. Rietschel, Oak Park, Illinois.

⁶⁶Adalbert H. Stellhorn to Rietschel, 25 September 1977.

⁶⁷Martin H. Stellhorn to Rietschel, 1 October 1977.

Father made it his business to see to it that we did our "homework." If we were about to make a trip to some part of our country, father saw to it that we were familiar with the area that we would be visiting. Leaving the house for several weeks meant having a list of closing procedures for the house. Did mother disconnect the iron? Had lunch been packed? Did we all have our materials on hand?⁶⁸

Adalbert sees much of his home training as spelling "caution, thoroughness, and thoughtfulness" ⁶⁹ William Kramer, Stellhorn's associate and a frequent visitor to the Stellhorn home further supports this by commenting that Stellhorn "kept his house, lawn, automobile in tip-top shape." ⁷⁰

Lest we paint too bleak a picture of a stiff Prussian father, it should be noted that the children's "affairs at school, paper routes, and neighborhood activities were always a vivid concern" for both parents. ⁷¹ There was also another dimension of togetherness as exemplified by the fact that even after the children were grown, those that still lived in the St. Louis area would get together at their parent's home (where Stellhorn also maintained an office) and would mimeograph, fold, stamp, and lick envelopes to get out into the mail their father's

⁶⁸Adalbert H. Stellhorn to Rietschel, 25 September 1977.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Kramer to Rietschel, 11 October 1977.

⁷¹Martin H. Stellhorn to Rietschel, 1 October 1977.

famous New Service bulletin.⁷² As will be borne out in a later chapter, Stellsborn as a parent and as an educational theorist, believed that the Christian home is the primary agency of Christian education and that if parents did their job the way God expected them to, all would be well. He was very strong on the father's responsibility and acted on that in his own family.

Stellsborn retired from his position as Secretary of Schools on December 31, 1960. A little over two years later his wife Amanda died at age seventy-four. Fourteen months later on May 17, 1964, at the age of seventy-six years, eleven months, and fifteen days, Dr. August C. Stellsborn succumbed to a heart condition and died after nearly fifty-six years of active, dedicated service to The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

August Joseph Conrad Stellsborn lived a long and fruitful life, 1887-1964, and this brief biographical review indicates a number of strands that form a composite of the man. Perhaps the most important aspect of Stellsborn is his religiosity. It is his Missouri Synod religious orientation that forms the basis for his educational ideas. Therefore, the next chapter will attempt to focus on these concerns as it reviews and discusses Stellsborn's religious orientation.

⁷²Adalbert H. Stellsborn to Rietschel, 25 September 1977.

CHAPTER II

STELLHORN'S RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION

An understanding of August C. Stellohorn's religious orientation is essential in order to examine adequately his educational contributions which are the subject of this study. However, Stellohorn never set down a definitive statement of his religious beliefs. Rather, his writings contain numerous theological references that are usually unexplained by their author. Since there is no evidence to the contrary, the writer assumes that Stellohorn adhered to the basic teachings of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. It is from this writer's understanding of orthodox Missouri Synod doctrine, therefore, that Stellohorn's theological position will be defined and explained. Keeping in mind the caveats listed above, the religious orientation of August C. Stellohorn will be explored through a treatment of his views on man's religiosity, the Holy Scriptures, God, creation, man, the Law and sin, the Gospel message of salvation by grace, and the Church. The chapter will conclude with a brief synopsis of Stellohorn's posture on these spiritual concepts.

Stellohorn believed that "Religion is something which

every human being possesses . . ."¹ and that "Man is never nonreligious."² Specifically, he stated that

Natural spirituality and a natural religion in the unregenerated are as certain and as universal as the fact that man has a soul. The unbeliever, as well as the believer, has his sentiments, feelings, desires, opinions, judgments, tastes, behavior, will, his view and philosophy of life in time and eternity, and his Supreme Being, whom he secretly or openly worships. All people are spiritual and religious. If man is not truly Christian, he is either a false Christian or an unchristian; but he is always spiritual and always religious.³

For Stellsborn, religion was "not only a system of faith and worship, but also one's conception and philosophy of life and the practice that follows out of this."⁴ Missouri Synod Lutheranism was not solely "doctrine and church practise, but also [a] view of life in the light of God's Word and all our thoughts, words, and deeds result-

¹August C. Stellsborn, ed., News Service, Bulletin IV (April 1, 1930): 1. As was indicated in Chapter I, the News Service was published from January, 1923, to December, 1947, a period of twenty-five years. During the first six years (January, 1923, to July-August, 1929) of its publication, it was reprinted in full in the Lutheran School Journal. This will explain why in this chapter and in each succeeding chapter of this study there are used two different forms of footnote citations for the News Service. The writer's initial research utilized the journal reprints and his later search at the Concordia Historical Institute utilized the bulletin copies from September, 1929, to December, 1947 that are kept in the archives.

²August C. Stellsborn, "Why Parochial Schools?" Advance 1 (October 1954): 5.

³August C. Stellsborn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1928), pp. 4-5.

⁴Ibid., p. 5.

ing from this in [an individual's] daily life."⁵

In view of the foregoing, one can focus more specifically on Stellhorn's religious orientation. Though he sometimes displayed a rather narrow Missouri Synod parochialism, Stellhorn was first and foremost a Christian in his religious commitment. He believed that "Christianity is not only the most important, but also the most uncompromising cause on earth."⁶ Consistent with his view that Christianity must be "uncompromising," Stellhorn believed that it was essential for The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod not to "waver at any time in its determination to adhere to pure doctrine and Scriptural practice in the life of the church and in the life of the individual member"⁷ It was a source of great pride to Stellhorn that The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod was "one of the most conservative Church bodies in the world"⁸ It is important to note that he did not view religious conservatism as particularly "spiritually meritorious in itself," because, as Stellhorn stated, "there

⁵Ibid.

⁶August C. Stellhorn, "Why We Should Be Determined to Maintain Parish or Inter-Parish Schools," unpublished essay delivered to the New York Pastoral Conference, New York City, April 1, 1940, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellhorn papers, p. 4.

⁷August C. Stellhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), p. 488.

⁸Ibid., p. 483.

are religious bodies or world religions which have always possessed and conserved their particular faith throughout many centuries but whose faiths are based on false doctrine."⁹ While these bodies might be conservative, "they are not Biblically conservative."¹⁰ For Stellhorn, it was The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, together with some other church bodies, that "has ever been Biblically conservative" and "has diligently sought doctrinal truth and tenaciously clung to it" while inculcating "this truth upon [sic] its membership"¹¹ He strongly believed that The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod was conservative, or "strictly Christian" and "Biblical" because it insisted upon "indoctrination."¹² It was Stellhorn's belief that "Churches and individuals go wrong or become indifferent because of their slight knowledge and training in God's Word."¹³ The idea of training is critical in Stellhorn's concept of the purposes of Lutheran education and will be explored at some length in Chapter IV.

Stellhorn viewed the Bible, both Old and New Testament, as the source and norm of Christian doctrine. He envisioned doctrine as

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 64 (July 1929): 266.

¹³Ibid.

. . . that which is taught, believed and applies in life. The Christian doctrine is that which the Word of God teaches regarding matters temporal or eternal; it is the truth that God has revealed to man, and that He has commanded His children, His Church, to teach and preach and practice.¹⁴

The doctrine of the Church must insist that life is not "understood as merely Christian deeds, but rather as the entire attitude, thoughts, words, and deeds of the believer, based solely on the Word of God."¹⁵ In essence, Stelhorn believed that no one can tell man what God wants him to believe and to do but God Himself. Consequently, knowledge of God and of His will toward man can be derived from no other source than from God's own Words. Thus, the primacy of Holy Scripture is obvious. For Stelhorn, "God's Word [was] supreme."¹⁶

Regarding the origin and inspiration of the Bible, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod teaches that the Bible is a collection of books, written by different men, but that it has but one Author, and this Author is God. In other words, the Bible is God's own Book. It does not contain the Word of God intermingled with many human additions and insertions, but is in all its parts the Word of God. Stelhorn alluded to this tenet when he confessed that "the

¹⁴August C. Stelhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin XII (December 1, 1942): 2.

¹⁵August C. Stelhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin IV (April 1, 1935): 1.

¹⁶August C. Stelhorn, "The Important Office of Fathers," The Lutheran Witness 51 (June 1932): 207.

Bible . . . is the Word of God . . . though written by men . . ." and consequently "is unchangeable."¹⁷ He amplified this further by confessing that the "'Word of God' means what God said or caused to be written" and even though the many different books of the Bible "were written over a period of about 4,000 years, all by different writers . . . they agree as though there was only one author. And there was,--God."¹⁸ For Stellhorn, the various writers of Scripture, though probably speaking and writing other things during their lifetimes, functioned under a kind of divine impulse and command when constructing Scripture. It was God the Holy Spirit who not only moved these men when to write, but also suggested, inspired, and controlled what and how they wrote. Stellhorn attested that "Holy men of God wrote these many books, but only 'as they were moved by the Holy Ghost [Spirit]' 2 Pet. 1:21."¹⁹ Because "the Bible is the inspired Word of God . . . ,"²⁰ Stellhorn confidently believed that the "Word of God is true" and

¹⁷August C. Stellhorn, "Plans for Lessons in Religion," Lutheran School Journal 79 (November 1943): 106.

¹⁸August C. Stellhorn, "Essentials of Catechism Training," unpublished essay delivered to the South Wisconsin District Teachers Conference (attached sample lesson preparations), November 6, 1942, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellhorn papers, p. 4.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰August C. Stellhorn, "Educational Objectives of a Lutheran School," Lutheran School Journal 67 (January 1932): 204.

"eternal."²¹ God's Word was "absolutely true and sure . . ."²² and "[w]e can, therefore, rely on the Word of God in life and death. It contains no mistakes. The best books of men may contain errors, but not the Bible."²³

In addition to inerrancy and truth, the Bible held other attributes for Stelhorn as well. For example, he saw authority in Scripture that called for instant and unqualified acceptance of its entire contents and alluded to this when he confirmed that "where Holy Scripture does not rule, a false religion will." Stelhorn also saw an efficacious dimension in the Bible when he wrote that the Word of God "is . . . a live and powerful means whereby God does great miracles in the hearts of men"²⁴ and again when he testified that the "power of Scripture [is] not detached from God, but God operates through it"²⁵ In other words, Holy Scripture has the power to produce an effect or to make an impression on the heart, but, while the Word must be learned and its true sense and meaning must be perceived by the mind, the effect is not produced by mere external

²¹Stelhorn, "Essentials of Catechism Training," p. 4.

²²August C. Stelhorn, "The General Curriculum: Religion," Lutheran School Journal 63 (March 1928): 88.

²³Stelhorn, "Essentials of Catechism Training," p. 4.

²⁴Stelhorn, "The General Curriculum: Religion," p. 87.

²⁵Stelhorn, "Plans for Lessons in Religion," p. 106.

contact with the Word. Rather, it was "the Holy Spirit" that could through the "Word of God work upon the heart and will . . ." ²⁶ and make man "react favorably to the Word of God." ²⁷ It is "when the Word of God is taken to heart--and only then--" that man will "be, think, speak, and act as God directs. In other words, only then, and in that measure, is he a Christian." ²⁸

Stellhorn did not hesitate to comment on the purposes of the Bible. In his view, one of the principal purposes of God giving man His Word was not for God's "own use or benefit, but for fallen mankind. Its purpose is to save us sinners . . ." ²⁹ by coming "to the knowledge of God and ourselves, to repentance and faith, and to eternal life . . ." ³⁰ Stellhorn believed that it was the foremost concern of a Christian to "know himself in the light of the Scripture," because not possessing "such knowledge of self, man is self-righteous and unapproachable by the gospel of salvation." ³¹ In a capsule, then, Stellhorn believed that "God gave His Word, had it written, inspired it word for

²⁶August C. Stellhorn, "Effective Religious Instruction," Lutheran School Journal 75 (May 1940): 400.

²⁷Stellhorn, "The General Curriculum: Religion," p. 87.

²⁸Stellhorn, "Essentials of Catechism Training," p. 11.

²⁹Ibid., p. 5.

³⁰Ibid., p. 2.

³¹Ibid., p. 1.

word, 'to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.'" ³² While The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod teaches additional purposes of Scripture, namely that it educates and trains the believer in holiness of life and that it magnifies God's glory, Stellhorn appears to have commented directly only upon its function of salvation. More will be said later in this chapter regarding the salvation message contained in Scripture.

Closely related to the above, Stellhorn, in quoting 1 Tim. 3: 15-17, summarized the various uses of Holy Scripture when he stated that the Bible was "given for our instruction, 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,' 'able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.'" ³³ Stellhorn re-affirmed basic Missouri Synod teachings: (1) that argue that the Bible is the source-book of all Christian doctrine whereby God tells us what He would have us know, believe, and do; (2) that view the Scriptures as a testing device in recognizing error (e.g., reproof); (3) that envision God's Word as a means whereby we may learn where our lives are in need of correction and improvement; and, finally, (4) that see the Bible used for instruction and training in righteousness--a book that enables us to become holy in our lives.

³²Stellhorn, "Plans for Lessons in Religion," p. 105.

³³August C. Stellhorn, "Bible History and Our New Text-Book," Lutheran School Journal 72 (October 1936): 75.

It should be pointed out that Stellohorn's conception of the Bible went beyond doctrine, inspiration, and various attributes, purposes and uses. In his eyes, the Bible was also history. He wrote: "The entire Scripture has a historical setting. The revelations of God extended over a period of more than four thousand years and are largely in the form of history or connected with history."³⁴ But, said Stellohorn, "the Bible is not primarily a history of civilization as the world understands such a history" ³⁵ Rather, "Scripture is the historical unfolding of God's plan of salvation for sinful mankind." ³⁶ Thus, for Stellohorn Scripture spoke "chiefly of what God has done or will do" ³⁷ but, it was the "divinity of Scripture" that was one of the "essential doctrines of the Christian faith." ³⁸

Suprisingly, the one aspect of Stellohorn's religious beliefs that one cannot document substantively in his published and unpublished writings is his concept of God.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵August C. Stellohorn, "Message to the Teachers: Dangerous History Text-Books," Lutheran School Journal 69 (May 1934): 416.

³⁶Stellohorn, "Bible History and Our New Text-Book," p. 75.

³⁷August C. Stellohorn, "The Hand of the Lord in Christian Education," Lutheran School Journal 73 (November 1937): 102.

³⁸August C. Stellohorn, "The Saxon Centennial and the Schools: I. The Cause of the Saxon Emigration to America," Lutheran School Journal 74 (February 1939): 258.

Considering his thoughts on man's natural spirituality and his further comments on the origin, inspiration, attributes, and purposes of Holy Scripture, one can safely assume that he accepted the existence of a deity, but he renders no definitive statement on the matter. We can deduce from Stelhorn's comments dealing with the Bible as history that God was revealed, in part, through history. We can also take the proverbial "leap of faith" and easily ascertain that God's existence was revealed most fully for Stelhorn in the Bible. Both are sources accepted in Missouri Synod Lutheranism. Two other sources of the deity's manifestation recognized in Missouri's orthodoxy are nature and man's conscience. Missouri Synod Lutherans traditionally have believed that neither the origin nor the continued existence of the world can be satisfactorily explained unless there is a Prime Cause that brought it into being, and an omnipotent Power that sustains and governs it. They have also held that conscience, as it holds man accountable for his deeds to a Power higher than himself, also testifies to the existence of God. Perhaps, these latter two sources were so well-ingrained in Stelhorn's religious beliefs that he did not believe that they required comment.

While The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod teaches that God possesses a number of divine attributes (e.g., God is a simple, indivisible essence; God is immutable; God is infinite; God is eternal; God is wise; God is holy; God is just; God is righteous; God is truth; God is good),

Stellhorn commented directly on only two of these. He once stated that with God "nothing is impossible."³⁹ Here he alluded to the Missouri Synod teaching about the attribute of God's omnipotence (e.g., God can do and does do whatever He proposes to do). At another juncture he stated that "Jesus . . . because of His omniscience can pick out of a multitude those whom the Father has given Him."⁴⁰ As taught by the Missouri Synod, omniscience is that divine attribute that speaks to God's perfect knowledge (e.g., all knowing of all things). While concrete evidence is lacking, it is probably safe to assume that Stellhorn adhered to the traditional Missouri Synod posture regarding the other attributes of God as well.

Stellhorn did provide a brief view of his concept of the Triune God, another of the "essential doctrines of the Christian faith," when he wrote that a foremost concern of a Christian should be to "know God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost to be the true God"⁴¹ Here is a glimpse of Missouri Synod belief that teaches that the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) is made up of an undivided and indivisible Essence and, at the same time,

³⁹August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 64 (July 1929): 266.

⁴⁰August C. Stellhorn, "'Pray Ye the Lord of the Harvest.' Matt. 9:38," Lutheran School Journal 73 (April 1938): 362-363.

⁴¹Stellhorn, "Essentials of Catechism Training," p. 1.

consists of three distinct Persons. In other words, God is Three Persons in One Essence. Yet, as Stellhorn confessed, "the Father and the Son are one,"⁴² just as the Father and the Holy Ghost are one, and just as the Son and the Holy Ghost are one. There is no subordination of one Person to the other, but the three Persons are of equal rank and majesty, none to be preferred before the other. While completely distinct in person, they are one in essence.

One can only speculate about why Stellhorn did not develop a more extensive treatment of his concept of God in his writings. The most reasonable explanation would appear to focus on the nature of his audience. Most of his writing was prepared for Missouri Synod preachers and teachers who were well-versed in Lutheran theology. Consequently, Stellhorn may have felt that a definitive treatment on the existence and attributes of God as well as upon the Trinity was unnecessary.

Stellhorn's religious concepts about the creation of the world and of all things in the world manifest a simple faith. Very simply, he believed that God was "the Creator . . . of the world"⁴³ and "the Father of men . . . in the sense that He begat them, one and

⁴²Stellhorn, "'Pray Ye the Lord of the Harvest.'" Matt. 9:38," p. 302.

⁴³August C. Stellhorn, "The General Curriculum: Geography," Lutheran School Journal 63 (January 1928): 7.

The above quotation reveals a caustic element in Stellsborn's makeup, but more importantly, for the purposes of this chapter's topic, it reveals, without question, Stellsborn as an adamant six day creationist.

Also consistent with traditional Missouri Synod Lutheranism's teaching that the ultimate end of creation is the glory of God is Stellsborn's comment that it is the "pleasure and glory of the Lord" that "is the single ultimate objective of the Lord Himself and of all His works for and within the created universe."⁴⁷

An integral part of Stellsborn's religious beliefs, and one that has considerable impact on future considerations in this study (e.g., the purposes and curriculum of a Lutheran education), is his view of man. As previously stated, he saw the Triune God as the creator of man. The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod teaches that on the sixth day God made man (Adam) as the chief and foremost of all visible creatures from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, making him in His own image, giving man a rational soul and a conscience. The Missouri Synod also teaches that on the same day God made a woman (Eve) of a rib taken from Adam. Stellsborn affirmed this by attesting that "humanity began with a

⁴⁷August C. Stellsborn, "The General Objectives of Christian Education," Readings in the Lutheran Philosophy of Education, in Thirteenth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association, ed: L. G. Bickel and Raymond F. Surburg, pt. 3 (River Forest, Illinois: Lutheran Education Association, 1956), p. 69.

perfect man, Adam, and a perfect woman, Eve" ⁴⁸ and that "the Triune God counseled with Himself about the creation of man and said: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'" ⁴⁹ He further confessed that "the Creator breathed the breath of life into the clay form of Adam and made him a living soul, . . . holy, righteous, and rational" and that "Adam and Eve were made perfect in all respects, equipped with the highest qualities of which a human being in his perfection is capable" ⁵⁰ For Stelhorn, this "perfection" meant that man "knew and could keep the Law of God perfectly. He had temporal and eternal life as a natural possession." ⁵¹ In fact, "man was created for eternal life" ⁵² Also, because man "possessed all necessary knowledge of God and of the universe about him" and because man was "holy, he also had the correct attitude in all things, and a will that was perfectly attuned to that of his maker," he "truly pleased and glorified the Lord, which again "is the purpose of any creature of

⁴⁸ August C. Stelhorn, "A Warning to Lutheran Parents," The Lutheran Witness 53 (April 1934): 142.

⁴⁹ August C. Stelhorn, "Music in the Life of a Christian," Lutheran Education 87 (December 1951): 175.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Stelhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 3.

⁵² Stelhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 23.

God."⁵³ Another purpose of man, according to Stellohorn, "was to govern all other creatures on earth, in the sea, and in the air, and to make them serve his purposes."⁵⁴

Stellohorn viewed man as possessing "a wonderful body, and an immortal soul"⁵⁵ The body, of course, is material, but the soul of man is an immortal, living, spiritual essence. As Stellohorn phrased it,

A person consists of body and soul; and the actual being, the actual person is not the body with its physical brain and sense organs, but the soul. The body is merely the house in which the person lives. It is dead and useless without the soul.⁵⁶

In other words, man's spiritual essence dwells in the physical body, gives life to it, and is the carrier of man's personality, of his conscious self, his "ego". Stellohorn viewed the soul as "the spirit of man, which manifests itself in three general ways: intellectually, emotionally, and volitionally (head, heart, and will; or knowledge, reaction to knowledge, and action; or understanding, appropriation, and expression)."⁵⁷

As is obvious, man is a rational being. He can learn, think, and reason. The ideas of his mind stir up in

⁵³Stellohorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 3.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵August C. Stellohorn, "Message to the Teachers: My Lambs," Lutheran School Journal 68 (December 1932): 176.

⁵⁶Stellohorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 4.

⁵⁷August C. Stellohorn, "Mechanical Teaching of Religion," Lutheran School Journal 72 (February 1937): 243.

his heart emotions and feelings, which, in turn, press upon his will and produce voluntary action. And of all this man is conscious. Adam and Eve were "subject to God" and they knew that "If they disobeyed the Lord, they would lose their original holy estate and become evil."⁵⁸ As Stelhorn further pointed out:

The Lord had given man one simple law as a test of his faithfulness. He was not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden. However, tempted by the devil on the pretense that man would be like God and know good and evil, man did eat of the tree, and promptly lost his holy estate. He now became an evil being like the devil, spiritually dead, and an enemy of God. He was now subject to temporal and eternal death; he had lost eternal life; for the Lord had threatened that in the day that he would eat of the forbidden fruit, he would surely die. Through his sin man had now also lost much of his original knowledge; his attitude was wrong, and his will was perverse. He lost much of his control over other creatures, for they now resisted him; even the ground was cursed.⁵⁹

Thus, the original state of innocence came to an abrupt end when man fell into sin. The immediate result of man's fall was the loss of the image of God. Having sinned, man was no longer holy; being guilty, he was no longer innocent; he had exchanged fellowship with God for fellowship with the devil. Because of all this he was under the just wrath and curse of God; the happiness and bliss of Paradise was lost, and depravity, misery, and death were his lot. As Stelhorn phrased it, "man originally created in the image of God, as the Lord and ruler of the earth," had "fallen from his

⁵⁸Stelhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 4.

⁵⁹Ibid.

estate and" was "now a lost and condemned creature, in great misery of body and soul, and subject to temporal death and eternal damnation" ⁶⁰ Thus this first transgression of Adam and Eve was attended by disastrous consequences; it brought misery and woe on them personally and upon all their children. Consequently, as Stellhorn pointed out, "a great change has taken place since Creation" because of Adam and Eve's "disastrous fall into sin" ⁶¹ and this change is that now all mankind is, "by nature, totally depraved in body and soul" ⁶²

The foregoing treatment of creation and man provides us with Stellhorn's understanding of the entry of sin into the world. It also provides an insight into Stellhorn's concept of the Law and of sin. Stellhorn's understanding of God's Law was reasonably definitive. He recognized that man possessed a natural knowledge of the Law--one that went beyond the command to Adam and Eve not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This is evidenced when he wrote that:

When God created man in His image, He gave him a complete knowledge of the Law, as well as a complete

⁶⁰ Stellhorn, "The General Objectives of Christian Education," p. 69.

⁶¹ Stellhorn, "Music in the Life of a Christian," p. 177.

⁶² August C. Stellhorn, "Christian Education," essay delivered to the Alberta and British Columbia District, July 1, 1942, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellhorn papers, p. 4.

knowledge of all creation. God made man perfectly holy and righteous, and thus enabled him to fulfill the Law of God and to live eternally before God. There was then no need . . . of a written Law.⁶³

There was no need because God inscribed the knowledge of His will, the moral Law, in man's heart. Therefore, even after the Fall, man still "has by nature a sense of right and wrong, for there is a trace left of the Law of God written in his heart." This trace is man's "conscience, which will accuse or excuse him according to his knowledge of right and wrong."⁶⁴ Missouri Synod orthodoxy takes the position that while conscience must not be ignored, it is, in itself, not an infallible guide to conduct.

Stellhorn believed that "the Lord . . . saw no need of putting His Law in writing for about 2,000 years . . . because . . . the extreme longevity of the patriarchs" caused the Law to be "rather definitely transmitted from generation to generation"⁶⁵ It was on Mount Sinai that this Law was amplified and codified in the Ten Commandments by God Himself, and published through Moses. Stellhorn correctly pointed out that:

the term "Law" here includes the Ceremonial Law [those rules and regulations governing the ritual of the Old

⁶³August C. Stellhorn, "The Proper Use of the Law and Gospel in Teaching," Lutheran Education 89 (April 1954): 382.

⁶⁴August C. Stellhorn, "The Christian School and Good Citizenship," Parish Education 31 (June 1953): 88.

⁶⁵Stellhorn, "The Proper Use of the Law and Gospel in Teaching," p. 382.

Testament worship service and its sacrifices] and everything given specifically to the Children of Israel, but done away with when the Seed [Christ] came, [and] the Moral Law [the Ten Commandments], which will never be discarded⁶⁶

Missouri Synod theology teaches that since the Fall unregenerate man cannot keep the Law perfectly. Stelhorn testified to this teaching on more than one occasion as, for example, when he confessed that "complete holiness and perfection is not attainable in this life"⁶⁷ and that "even the sincerest Christian can not fully meet the demands [Law] of God"⁶⁸ Stelhorn understood the Law to carry a curse, or a threat of punishment, with it. He wrote that with "each transgression of the Law" man "brings the wrath of God, death, and damnation down upon himself"⁶⁹ and in a personal moment confessed that "by my transgression I have aroused and deserved the wrath and punishment of the living God," and have "proved myself wholly unworthy"⁷⁰ As a result of this curse, "The sinner is guilty on every count of the divine Law and faces both temporal and eternal

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷August C. Stelhorn, "Soul Service in School," unpublished essay delivered to the St. Louis Mixed Conference, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, April 17, 1936, Concordia Historical Institute, Stelhorn papers, p. 5.

⁶⁸Stelhorn, "Why We Should Be Determined to Maintain Parish Or Inter-Parish Schools," p. 4.

⁶⁹August C. Stelhorn, "Message to the Teachers: The Augsburg Confession on Christian Training," Lutheran School Journal 66 (December 1930): 175.

⁷⁰August C. Stelhorn, "Reaching the Heart," Lutheran School Journal 78 (May 1943): 394.

punishment."⁷¹

Stellhorn properly understood that man "is not saved by the Law or the works of the Law" ⁷² In other words, if man had the ability to keep the Law perfectly, then he could be righteous with God, but since he does not have the ability and cannot conform to its requirements, the Law cannot save him. Since the fall of man, the chief purpose of the Law is to convict man of his innate sinfulness and of his numerous offenses against the holy will of God, and also of the guilt incurred by sin, all of which brings down upon him the righteous wrath of God. Stellhorn commented that the Ten Commandments, or the Moral Law, "has as its chief purpose to be 'our schoolmaster'" who convinces us of our sinfulness and our sinful deeds and condemns us in time and eternity before our holy and righteous God.⁷³ He further amplified this when he wrote that through "the Law comes the knowledge of sin; and the knowledge of sin makes us Christians meek and contrite of spirit; we learn to feel our complete helplessness."⁷⁴

Stellhorn attributed sin's entrance into the world as a result of Adam and Eve's fall. But what of the sin of

⁷¹August C. Stellhorn, "The Christmas Theme in Our Education," The Lutheran Witness 65 (December 1944): 409.

⁷²Stellhorn, "The Proper Use of the Law and Gospel in Teaching," pp. 382-383.

⁷³Ibid., p. 382.

⁷⁴August C. Stellhorn, "Ye Fathers," Lutheran School Journal 57 (March 1922): 66.

future generations? What of Satan?

It is apparent that Stelhorn viewed sin as a violation of the Law of God. Though this violation entered the world through the fall of Adam and Eve to the temptation of the devil, Stelhorn observed a personal devil still very much at work in our lives today. He wrote that "there is a great and terrible force at work" and that this force "is Satan and his countless accomplices."⁷⁵ In other words, the devil is the external cause of sin. He is not resting on his first success in the Garden of Eden, but has since been the prime mover of all evil.

Essential to Stelhorn's religious orientation is the doctrine of original sin. Stelhorn believed that "our human nature is totally depraved and inclined toward all evil."⁷⁶ This natural depravity is the disastrous consequence of the sin of our first parents (Adam and Eve), because the guilt of their first transgression has been imputed to all mankind since that time, as has the corruption of their nature also been transmitted. It is as if man, since the fall, possesses both a hereditary guilt and a hereditary depravity. Stelhorn felt that "the truth about original sin is essential." He believed that:

Men err in two ways concerning original sin: Some false

⁷⁵August C. Stelhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 59 (July 1924): 270-271.

⁷⁶August C. Stelhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 64 (June 1929): 230.

teachers . . . "deny that original depravity is sin," while others deny the depravity itself. [T]he natural depravity and the Biblical fact that it "is truly sin, even now condemn[s] and bring[s] eternal death" [Man] is sinful through and through, totally depraved in body and soul, and fully deserving of death and damnation, even without committing a single actual sin.⁷⁷

In other words, it is the sinfulness of our whole nature, which is man's by birth, that causes us to be in conflict with the demands of God. It is the "old Adam" or the "flesh, born of flesh," that "constantly pulls down, away from God," and "toward the devil and the world."⁷⁸

Because first man sinned, lost the image of God, and transmitted his depraved state to each succeeding generation, each of our sins begin within us because our hearts are now inclined to all evil. In Stellhorn's words, man's "Incorrigible flesh . . . desires only to satisfy its own desires and lusts"⁷⁹ and is "inclined to all that is evil."⁸⁰ Since sin evolves from our depraved soul, Stellhorn saw the heart of man as the internal cause of sin. Therefore, we should not blame the devil for what we do. It is man's heart that is also the origin and the cause of "actual sin" (a term used above by Stellhorn), or sin

⁷⁷Stellhorn, "Message to the Teachers: The Augsburg Confession on Christian Training," p. 175.

⁷⁸August C. Stellhorn, "A Child's Manifestation of His Faith," Lutheran Education 90 (May 1955): 426.

⁷⁹Stellhorn, "The Christmas Theme in Our Education," p. 409.

⁸⁰August C. Stellhorn, "'Take This Child Away and Nurse It for Me,'" Lutheran School Journal 73 (October 1937): 77.

involving some activity, either external or internal, on the part of man (vs. original sin).

If Stellohorn's religious beliefs had encompassed no more, man's continued existence under the wrath and punishment of God's Law would be devastatingly depressing at the very least. Fortunately, within Stellohorn's scheme of things, there is a way to escape the consequences of disobedience to God's Law. To Stellohorn, God was a gracious and merciful God. It is to that manifestation of God's grace and mercy that we now turn.

Stellohorn saw God's grace and mercy as first manifesting itself immediately after the fall of Adam and Eve when "the Lord promised man a Savior from sin and from eternal damnation." It would be through faith in this Savior that man "would again become a child of God and have eternal salvation."⁸¹ Stellohorn recognized that all men have sinned, are guilty before God, are under the curse of the Law, deserve death, and are incapable of achieving their own salvation. He believed that God, moved by His love and compassion for man, resolved to save mankind by sending a Savior. It is this doctrine of salvation by undeserved grace that distinguishes the Christian religion from all other religions in the world. It is this doctrine that forms the center and core of Stellohorn's religious beliefs. As Stellohorn pointed out, "Of ourselves, it is true, we are

⁸¹Stellohorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 4.

nothing and can do nothing; but the grace of God is everything, and we have received that grace."⁸²

The Savior that God promised, believed Stelhorn, was "Jesus Christ, who has fully atoned for the sins of the world," who "offers" man "forgiveness of all sins, freedom from death and the devil, and life eternal . . ."⁸³ and who "had come to fulfill the Scripture of the Old Testament."⁸⁴ In Stelhorn's framework, Christ was "the perfect God-man."⁸⁵ Christ possessed two inseparable, though distinct, natures--true God and true man. Christ had to be true man because if He was to save mankind, He had to become the substitute for man so that He could satisfy the demands of the Law and also that He might be capable of suffering and dying for mankind. Yet, if Christ were just a mere man, He could never have redeemed man because a sinner cannot save himself, much less another. Consequently, only God could render full satisfaction to God. Stelhorn believed that "the question 'Who is Jesus Christ?'" was:

⁸²August C. Stelhorn, "Message to the Teachers: Another Year of Grace," Lutheran School Journal 70 (January 1935): 222.

⁸³Stelhorn, "The Christmas Theme in Our Education," p. 409.

⁸⁴August C. Stelhorn, "The Pedagogy of Jesus," unpublished essay delivered to the Western District Teachers Conference, Jefferson City, Missouri, August 21, 1934, Concordia Historical Institute, Stelhorn papers, p. 7.

⁸⁵August C. Stelhorn, "Educational Objectives of a Lutheran School," Lutheran School Journal 67 (January 1932): 203.

a question upon the answering of which eternal life and death depend, the answering of which one way or another divides all humanity into the sheep or goats that will stand at the right and left of Christ on Judgment Day [because] if men disbelieve the divinity of Christ . . . [t]hey have no Savior, no salvation, they will be lost; they disbelieve the whole Bible; God's wrath is upon them.⁸⁶

In other words, in order for men to be saved, they must "believe in Jesus Christ as true God and true man and as their Savior."⁸⁷ In Stellhorn's religious view

The climax of the Christmas-story is that Jesus was born . . . this great event; this thing that had been held out to the hopes and yearning hearts of God's children for thousands of years; this center and core of all Christianity; this consummation of God's plan from eternity; this divine step to reconcile the world with God; this event that made heaven resound with songs of praise and glory and brought the heavenly hosts to earth to kindle the same celebration among sinful men.⁸⁸

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod teaches that the single purpose of Christ's work is the salvation of mankind, but that Scripture distinguishes three distinct phases of His work. Stellhorn echoed this when he stated that Christ's

. . . primary mission was to reconcile the world with a just and holy God and to bring peace and salvation to fallen and sin-ridden mankind. For this purpose He took upon Himself the threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King--as a Prophet to reveal Himself through word and deed as the Son of God and the Savior of the world,

⁸⁶ Stellhorn, "Mechanical Teaching of Religion," pp. 244-245.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ August C. Stellhorn, "Message to the Teachers: Application of the Christmas-Story," Lutheran School Journal 70 (December 1934): 179.

and through the preaching of the Gospel to continue to reveal Himself as such to the end of time; as a Priest to fulfill the Law of God in the stead of man, to sacrifice Himself in paying the full penalty of the Law, and to intercede for us with His Heavenly Father to the end of time for our justification; as a King to rule mightily over all creatures in the interest of His elect, and especially to foster, lead, rule, and bring His Church to the glory of heaven.⁸⁹

If a priest is viewed as one who represents man before God, then Christ in His priestly office procured for all men forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. If a prophet is viewed as God's representative and ambassador to man, then Christ in His Prophetic office makes known the fact of forgiveness, life, and salvation to men, and freely offers to all the blessings of His redemption, and thereby draws man to Himself. If a king is viewed as one who has power and authority to rule, then Christ in His Kingly office so rules all things that through the ministry of His Church men attain the glory prepared for them.

What are the means by which the knowledge of grace and salvation, and grace and salvation itself, are imparted to mankind? For Stellhorn, the means are to be found in the Scripture. Stellhorn saw "the doctrinal content of Holy Scripture" as consisting "of two basically different

⁸⁹Stellhorn, "The Pedagogy of Jesus," p. 1.

doctrines . . . "--the Law and the Gospel.⁹⁰ His concept of the Law has already been explored extensively, but it is the Gospel that is at the heart of Stellsborn's theology. The Gospel is the means by which the knowledge of grace and salvation, and grace and salvation itself, are imparted. It was the "saving Gospel," the "good news" of the grace of God in Christ, the message that runs throughout the Bible, that has the prime position in Stellsborn's theology.⁹¹

Stellsborn believed that "We should always make sure . . . that we . . . remain conscious . . . of the full meaning of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and at the same time, really appreciative of such grace, and deeply thankful."⁹² In this sphere, he felt that the Gospel contained certain "cardinal truths that must be ingrained upon our minds and hearts and kept clear."⁹³ Chief among these truths were the following:

1. The redemption of mankind through Jesus Christ is universal and complete, no one human being excepted.
2. The grace of God in Jesus Christ toward mankind is universal and complete, no one human being excepted.
3. The justification of all mankind before the throne of God for the Sake of Jesus Christ is universal and

⁹⁰Stellsborn, "The Proper Use of the Law and Gospel in Teaching," p. 377.

⁹¹August C. Stellsborn, "Message to the Teachers: Luther, Our Schools, and Missions," Lutheran School Journal 69 (November 1933): 128.

⁹²Stellsborn, "The Proper Use of the Law and Gospel in Teaching," p. 379.

⁹³Ibid.

complete, not one human being excepted.⁹⁴

Stellhorn uses "Justification" in an objective sense and alludes to the concept that sees justification as that public act of God by which He, on the basis of Christ's perfect, vicarious atonement declared the entire world to be justified in His sight. In a sense, Stellhorn sees justification as a declaration of amnesty. "The good news of the foregoing truths and of the grace and mercy of God," were for Stellhorn the Gospel in a general sense and, based upon the Scriptural command to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel . . ." he also believed that "The preaching and teaching of it is to be universal and all-inclusive"⁹⁵ For Stellhorn, the preaching of the Gospel was essential because:

The preaching, teaching, reading, or hearing of the good news is the means whereby the Holy Ghost reaches out to all men, including the greatest sinners, and urges them to believe this good news, and to endure and persist in this belief unto the end of their lives on earth, in order that they may have peace with God and life and salvation now and forever.⁹⁶

This work of God, the Holy Spirit, was pivotal since:

. . . no man can believe the good news out of himself. So the Holy Ghost does more than invite. He calls the sinner and unbeliever by the Gospel, enlightens him with His gifts, regenerates him, gives him faith and a new life, sanctifies and keeps him in the true faith. Hence, it is God, the Holy Ghost . . . that makes it possible for a sinner to believe the good news and be

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Ibid.

saved.⁹⁷

The fundamental truths of Stellohorn's vision of the Gospel clearly indicate that, even though Christ's redemptive work was for all men, man's conversion to faith in this redeeming work is not something he can do himself. Stellohorn believed that man's conversion to faith in Christ is ascribed to God through the work of the Holy Spirit and is called the work of sanctification.

In a broad sense, the work of sanctification includes all phases of the Holy Spirit's endeavors by which He leads sinners from the state of wrath into a state of grace and preserves them therein until they enter into a state of glory in heaven. Simply stated, the Holy Spirit makes man holy. As Stellohorn succinctly reiterated, "no one can call Jesus Lord except by the Holy Ghost."⁹⁸ The function of the Law was "to show the way, and where one stands." The function of the Gospel, which comes through the work of the Holy Spirit, was "to impart the strength and motive to walk the right way and to cancel all shortcomings for the sake of Jesus Christ."⁹⁹ Thus one is enabled to see Stellohorn's concept of the relationship of Law and Gospel.

⁹⁷Ibid., pp. 379-380.

⁹⁸Stellohorn, "Message to the Teachers: My Lambs," p. 176.

⁹⁹Stellohorn, "A Child's Manifestation of His Faith," p. 427.

For Stellohorn, "faith . . . is a gift of God."¹⁰⁰ It is "the Holy Spirit" that "kindles saving faith . . . and makes . . . a new spiritual creature."¹⁰¹ But, this,

Faith is not merely a matter of the heart, or mind, not knowledge or conviction, which are intellectual, but a matter of the heart; it is an emotional reaction to knowledge and conviction, a feeling of trust based on facts. It differs distinctly from believing what is true.¹⁰²

Stellohorn accepted the fact that "Faith includes knowledge, but" believed that "a mere knowledge and conviction concerning God . . . is no faith at all, merely a mental assent to what is true" and compared this to the "kind of 'faith' the devil has."¹⁰³ He adhered to this belief: "Faith must manifest itself."¹⁰⁴ He stated:

Like all other emotions, faith will always express itself in some measure, especially when put to a test. I say "in some measure" because ordinarily no one expresses his emotions all the time, except in fixed habits and character. However, like all other right emotions, the Christian faith results, and must result, in habits of thought, word, and deed, and in a stable character. Christian habits and character are the emotional set of a Christian, or the way in which he customarily thinks, speaks, and acts. Deviations from this emotional set in a Christian are his sins and shortcomings, which he will daily confess to the Lord, for which he will ask forgiveness, and for the

¹⁰⁰August C. Stellohorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin X (October 1, 1940): 4.

¹⁰¹Stellohorn, "A Child's Manifestation of His Faith," p.422.

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Ibid.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 425.

overcoming of which he will pray for strength.¹⁰⁵

For Stelhorn, "Lack of faith dishonors God" because "To honor God requires that we trust His promises, even when they seem impossible."¹⁰⁶

As can be seen from the quotation above, prayer was a component of Stelhorn's concept of the life of faith. He viewed prayer in this context as "essentially a cry, yearning, or expression of the heart and not a matter of words or form."¹⁰⁷ Further amplifying this, Stelhorn said that "prayer is to be made not merely for the purpose of asking things, but also to praise the Lord and His wonderful deeds, to offer up thanks, to commune with God, to edify our spirit, to put a troubled bosom to rest, to obtain strength, and the like."¹⁰⁸ While he believed that a prayer could "be very short" and that "we may pray at any time, anywhere, and in all situations . . . ," he warned that "thoughtless 'saying of prayers,' 'vain repetitions,' and mere lip-service are not only useless but a sin. A prayer that does not come from the heart is no prayer, no matter how regularly and diligently said."¹⁰⁹ He confessed that "A

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 422-423.

¹⁰⁶August C. Stelhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin X (October 1, 1940): 4.

¹⁰⁷August C. Stelhorn, "Teaching Children to Pray," Lutheran School Journal 73 (March 1938): 315.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 314.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., pp. 314-316.

worldly-minded or ungodly heart . . . and prayer do not go together."¹¹⁰ Rather, "faith is the principal thing in prayer."¹¹¹

Another cardinal truth of the Gospel as Stelhorn viewed it dealt with man's propensity for sinning even after his call to faith in Jesus Christ. Stelhorn heard the Gospel message saying that, in spite of man's continuing sinfulness, Christ

. . . will give unto them eternal life; they shall never perish and no man shall pluck them out of His and His Father's hand. Weak though they might still be, they are in the kingdom of grace, in the state of grace, in a covenant with God. They do not fall from grace because of their sins of weakness. They are already saints in the sight of God, looked upon and declared by God perfectly holy and righteous for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whom they believe, and whose blood and righteousness is imputed to them. So long as they remain in the saving faith, they stand completely justified before God at all times.¹¹²

Stelhorn, of course, assumed the constant repentance of the believer, but what is reflected here is the concept that God's justification (amnesty) is not only objective, but is also subjective. In other words, man is not only declared justified, but that the effect of this declaration is transmitted and imputed to all whom He brings to faith through the work of the Holy Spirit regardless of the believer's continued propensity for sin. For Stelhorn, the

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 317.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 315.

¹¹²Stelhorn, "The Proper Use of the Law and Gospel in Teaching," p. 380.

believer was completely justified before God.¹¹³ Stelhorn cautioned the believer when he stated:

As long as [man] still to some extent depends upon his own goodness or upon the good works that he . . . may be doing, he discounts, obscures, or despises "the glory of Christ's merit and benefits," . . . in fact, he makes himself part-savior of himself, denies the Gospel, and has not the saving faith.¹¹⁴

Again, man cannot save himself through any means or measures.

Among Stelhorn's fundamental beliefs about the Gospel was also the sad possibility that "a believer can fall away from God. He can engage once more in willful sinning, try to serve both God and the devil, grow indifferent toward the grace of God, and despise it."¹¹⁵ Consequently,

True believers must be made and kept thoroughly appreciative of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and of their state of grace; and that is done by keeping them thoroughly conscious of their sinful nature; their constant sinning in thought, word, and deed; the great danger of losing the grace of God by their own fault, and of being eternally lost after all. This can be done only by the Law of God, and by the numerous evangelical admonitions and warnings of Holy Scripture and our Lord

¹¹³Stelhorn, "Message to the Teachers: The Augsburg Confession on Christian Training," p. 175.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵Stelhorn, "The Proper Use of the Law and Gospel in Teaching," p. 380.

Jesus Christ to watch and be alert.¹¹⁶

According to Stellhorn, therefore, the Law served not only to condemn man, but also reminded man to remain steadfast in the faith. Stellhorn saw danger in an imbalance between the Law and Gospel because a Christian might be put to sleep spiritually (and eventually to death spiritually) by "an exclusive or almost exclusive" emphasis on the Gospel message "of comfort and forgiveness."¹¹⁷

Stellhorn's concept of the Gospel included his belief that "the believer, after his regeneration [spiritual rebirth] and complete justification before God, is now to become also personally more and more holy and righteous. This is his spiritual growth, or his sanctification in the faith."¹¹⁸ Here Stellhorn was alluding to sanctification in a narrower sense, evidently meaning that phase of the Holy Spirit's work whereby He incites and directs believers to lead a godly life, as opposed to the broader sense, of the process, mentioned earlier, which includes all the work of the Holy Spirit by which He leads a sinner to eternal life. For Stellhorn, sanctification was growth in knowledge of God and His will, "faith, and obedience."¹¹⁹ This growth had three dimensions: an ever-increasing enlightenment of the

¹¹⁶Ibid.

¹¹⁷Ibid., pp. 380-381.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 381.

¹¹⁹Stellhorn, "Essentials of Catechism Training," p. 2.

mind; renewal and cleanliness of the heart; and eagerness of the will in a life of good works (e.g., all thoughts, words, and deeds).¹²⁰ He amplified these dimensions further when he commented that

The first aspect is absolutely necessary for the next two, but wholly useless and dead if purely intellectual and without effect upon the heart and will; the second is the heart of Christianity and Christian life, for "out of the heart are the issues of life," and "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Out of the second aspect flows the third: conduct or action, and in the course of time fixed habits of conduct. In his sanctification the believer grows strong and is kept steadfast in the faith and the Word of God into life everlasting. Justification is always 100% complete; either that, or there is no justification at all. But sanctification is a spiritual growth. Its goal is perfection; but perfection remains a goal, and is never fully attained in this life.¹²¹

In other words, in sanctification man is made holy and grows in holiness of mind, heart, and will.

As part of this cardinal truth, Stellhorn saw justification and sanctification as belonging intimately together in reality. There is, he said

. . . no justification without sanctification, and, of course, no sanctification without justification. Both are the work of the Holy Spirit, not of the believer, though in sanctification the believer co-operates with the Holy Spirit. Both are effected by the Gospel, not by the Law, although the Law is the rule according to which the believer must live.¹²²

As can be seen, Stellhorn's perceived relationship between justification and sanctification was that there can be no

¹²⁰Stellhorn, "The Proper Use of the Law and Gospel in Teaching," p. 381.

¹²¹Ibid.

¹²²Ibid.

amnesty without holiness and no holiness without amnesty. What he failed to mention (though he probably assumed it) is the Missouri Synod's theological/chronological distinction that sees one as being justified first, then sanctified. One also senses from the foregoing statement that, in addition to its condemning and reminding functions, Stelhorn also believed that the Law serves as a guide for Christian living.

The final fundamental truth of the Gospel that Stelhorn believed must be kept in the foreground was that:

. . . in spite of universal redemption, grace, justification, and invitation, only a minority will believe the good news of the Gospel, enter in at the straight gate, and walk the narrow way that leadeth unto life. According to Jesus, the majority, although redeemed and justified, will be lost after all. As surely as those who believe and are baptized will be saved, so surely "he that believeth not shall be damned."¹²³

His message is clear. While it is the power of the Holy Spirit that works faith in sinners, man is still free to reject and, consequently, causes his own eternal destruction because man does not

. . . pass into oblivion, as a house [goes] up in smoke No. His soul, which is immortal, is taken up into eternity and reunited with the body on the great Day of Judgment, either to live in eternal bliss and joy or in eternal perdition. No appeal from the divine judgment.¹²⁴ No mistake by the Judge. No respect of persons.

¹²³Ibid., pp. 381-382.

¹²⁴August C. Stelhorn, The Education of My Children (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1933), p. 4.

Stellhorn commented further that:

When the soul is lost to the body, man is dead. When the soul is lost to God, man is spiritually dead. Spiritual death is damnation.

[A] soul is lost when the heart of man departs from the Lord and strives for worldly gain. This is a natural tendency. The heart wants profit. It sees great profit in worldly possessions, not alone in money, but in honor, comfort, amusement, knowledge, influence, and the like. These things the human heart craves above all; it can understand and evaluate them. They are much more tangible than spiritual profits. The heart does not so readily see the profits of faith and godliness. The unregenerated heart, in fact, does not see them at all, while the heart of the Christian sees them only darkly, as in a mirror. The heart, therefore, is constantly in danger of departing from the Lord, by declining in faith, holiness, and righteousness; and the soul is lost when this goes on to the point of spiritual death. The tendency is so strong that every believer would lose his soul, were it not for the fact that he is kept by the grace and power of God. Many believers are, nevertheless, thus lost

For a Christian it is a constant draw between gaining the world, or what the world has to offer, and maintaining his own soul. What is he profited if he shall gain the whole world? He can make use of only a limited part, and he can profit by it only for a limited time. That ends worldly profit And if one has lost his own soul while seeking worldly gain, death does not alone end worldly profit, but it ends life in all eternity. It ushers in eternal death, that is, eternal damnation.¹²⁵

As can be seen, in addition to his view of sin in the world, Stellhorn hearkened back to his concept of the dual structure of man--the physical body and the spiritual essence. All men will experience a physical death as part of their punishment for original and actual sin. However, physical death is not a total destruction or an annihilation of man, but the privation of physical life caused by the

¹²⁵August C. Stellhorn, October 14, 1937, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellhorn papers, p. 1.

separation of the soul from the body. Physical death is not the end of man because man's spiritual essence, his soul, is immortal and will rejoin the body, on Judgment Day. All men will experience God's judgment, and there will be no appeal because the Lord will make no error. If man has rejected the world and the sins of the world and has accepted the grace of God through Christ, offered freely in the Gospel, he will live in a state of eternal bliss in heaven. As for the unbelievers, those who accept the world and the sins of the world, the curse of the Law takes its course. Having rejected the grace of God in Christ Jesus, the wrath of God, which they provoked by their sin, condemns them to eternal damnation, a state of being forever rejected and banished from the blissful presence of God.

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod has historically taught that God determined the means by which salvation was procured for the world, namely, by the life and death of His Son. The "means of grace" are the Gospel and the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In the Synod's view, the Sacraments are means only because of the Gospel promise connected to them (e.g., the assurance to man of the grace of God; the offering to man of forgiveness of sins; and the working of strengthening of man's faith). Therefore, it is taught that there is but one means by which the knowledge of grace and salvation, and grace and salvation itself, are imparted to man; it is the Gospel, the good news of the grace of God in Christ. Baptism and the

Lord's Supper are merely ceremonies in which God presents to man that which the promise of the Gospel offers.

As can be seen by the treatment of Stelhorn's concept of the Gospel, his view regarding its good news and its primacy are entirely consistent with the Missouri Synod doctrine regarding the Gospel as a means of grace. Stelhorn's written words are deficient about the ceremonial aspects of the means of grace--Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He confessed that "the means of grace" are that "by which man is saved . . . ,"¹²⁶ but, with the exception of some isolated comments on Baptism, went no further. For Stelhorn, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism was that which regenerates man, or gives man "a new spiritual life"¹²⁷ More specifically, Baptism was "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, by means of which God rescues" men "from the terrible state of natural depravity and kindles saving faith in them"¹²⁸ It:

. . . makes him a new creature. He is now no longer a plain "lost and condemned creature," wayward and wrong in all thought and action, unable to "receive the things of the Spirit of God," but a child of God, sure of his eternal salvation and able to receive and profit by spiritual nourishment. As a new born spiritual babe he

¹²⁶Stelhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 31.

¹²⁷August C. Stelhorn, "The Habits of Children," The Lutheran Witness 62 (April 1943): 127.

¹²⁸August C. Stelhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 59 (July 1924): 270.

even desires the sincere milk of the Word of God that he may grow thereby.¹²⁹

The assurance of grace, offering of forgiveness, and the strengthening of faith--the Gospel promise connected with the Sacramental ceremonies--were obviously prevalent in Stellschorn's views on Baptism. Beyond these statements, his prolific writings contain little additional information on the Sacrament of Baptism and nothing on the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We can only assume, probably with considerable certainty, that Stellschorn's Missouri Synod orthodoxy maintained itself in this sphere also.

Stellschorn's concept of the Church becomes important when one understands his views on the sources and purposes of Lutheran education and the status of the Lutheran teacher. While Stellschorn viewed "true Lutheranism" as "true Bible Christianity; having, knowing, believing, confessing, living, and teaching the Word of God in all its truth and purity . . . ,"¹³⁰ he by no means conceived of the Church in a narrower parochial sense. He believed that "The Bible teaches only one Christian religion"¹³¹ Consequently, the word "church" for Stellschorn was a collective noun:

¹²⁹ August C. Stellschorn, "The Word 'Discipline' in the Fourth Petition," Lutheran Education 90 (December 1954): 174.

¹³⁰ Stellschorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 31.

¹³¹ Stellschorn, "Why Parochial Schools?" p. 4.

. . . and denotes two or more persons that gather together for church purposes

The Church of which we speak here is "the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints," which transcends all organizational and denominational lines, and embraces all true Christians. At the same time, any part of this one universal Church, any number of local Christians, and if there were only two or three, who gather together in the name of the Lord to carry out their God-given ministry jointly, are the true Christian Church at large.

Nor is only the local organized Christian congregation the Church. Any number of Christians who are members of local congregations and gather together for church purposes other than those of a congregation, are truly the Christian Church.¹³²

A number of orthodox Missouri Synod theological views are contained in Stellanor's concept of the Church as a body that incorporates many persons who by faith have entered into close and intimate relation with Christ. This broad view of the Church includes all those who historically came to faith, who presently are in the faith, and who in the future will come to faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. In Missouri Synod Lutheranism, this group is the "invisible Church" because faith, the means by which men become members of the Church, is invisible to human eyes and therefore the Church itself is invisible to man. In Stellanor's perspective,

The members of "the holy Christian Church" are holy in the sight of God, not because they are personally holy, but because the Lord has declared them perfectly holy and righteous for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whom

¹³²August C. Stellanor, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," unpublished essay delivered to the Western District Teachers Conference, November 5, 1952, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellanor papers, pp. 1-2.

they believe as their Redeemer and Propitiation of their sins. That makes them saints. Hence the name "holy Christian Church, the communion of saints."

Personally, and so long as they live in the flesh, these saints are still very imperfect, unholy and unrighteous. Some are strong in faith, some weak. But, fortunately, membership is not made contingent upon the degree of faith.¹³³

As is obvious, Stellsborn believed that membership in the invisible Church was not contingent upon one's degree of faith, but simply upon faith in Christ. What he left unsaid is that the moment an individual loses his faith he ceases to be a member of this invisible Church.

Also evident in Stellsborn's concept of the Church is the Missouri Synod view of the "visible Church" or as he put it, "the visible company of Christians on earth" ¹³⁴ This visible Church is "the local Christian congregation [or] the church in a given locality, a fixed group of Christians that can and do gather together regularly and perform the ministry of the Church locally" ¹³⁵ While members of the invisible Church are all true believers, the same cannot be said for the visible Church. Stellsborn believed that:

In a Christian congregation, where there may also be unbelievers and hypocrites we are compelled to judge by outward appearance, and to assume that all professing Christians are true believers unless or until they

¹³³Ibid., p. 2.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 3.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 2.

expose themselves as unbelievers¹³⁶

Hence, to extend this somewhat, the unbelievers united in the visible Church do not form an integral part of the Church, but are rather a foreign element. The privileges and duties conferred upon the believers are not vested in them, although externally they participate in them. Nevertheless, outward appearance makes them members of the visible Church, or congregation.

Briefly stated, Stellhorn viewed the invisible Church as the total number of those who have true faith in their hearts and the visible Church as the total number of those who profess the faith. The invisible Church is hidden in the visible Church.

For Stellhorn, "the work of the Church or the individual Christian's obligations are not ended when a person comes to faith, or when he has outwardly affiliated with the Church. The work has only begun, although the true believer is ready for heaven."¹³⁷ Stellhorn believed that the "Church and the cause of Christianity is backed

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 3.

¹³⁷Stellhorn, "Why We Should Be Determined to Maintain Parish or Inter-Parish Schools," pp. 4-5.

by . . . the power and authority of God Himself."¹³⁸ As he viewed it, "the Church is the bride of the Lord Jesus, having His presence, love, promises, and blessings" ¹³⁹ What Stelhorn was alluding to is the teaching of the Missouri Synod that Christ rules and governs His Church.

In a sense, Christ is the Church because it is His Word, as found in the inspired Scriptures, that is the sole power and authority in the Church. It is Christ's so-called "Great Commission," ¹⁴⁰ found in Scripture, that provides the Church with its work and obligation. From this perspective Stelhorn saw "the whole purpose of the Church" as "saving souls for eternity" ¹⁴¹ He stated that "The chief mission (singular) of the Church . . . is to teach and preach the Word for the conversion, strengthening, preservation, and salvation of souls." ¹⁴² This mission is

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 4.

¹³⁹ August C. Stelhorn, "Message to the Teachers: Whose Is the Child?" Lutheran School Journal 66 (September 1930): 29.

¹⁴⁰ After His resurrection, but prior to His ascension, Christ spoke the following words to His disciples: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28: 19-20). In Christian circles, these words are known as the "Great Commission."

¹⁴¹ Stelhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 486. p. 486.

¹⁴² Stelhorn, "Why We Should Be Determined to Maintain Parish or Inter-Parish Schools," p. 3.

accomplished through the means of grace (e.g., the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments--Baptism and the Lord's Supper).

Another term to describe the Church's mission is "ministry" (or service). In Stellhorn's frame of reference, "the term 'ministry' . . . is properly applied . . . to the office or commission of the Church or the congregation."¹⁴³ Stellhorn continued by explaining that "The ministry of a congregation is the office or commission to teach and preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments publically."¹⁴⁴ By "public," Stellhorn meant in behalf of all, not necessarily something performed in a public place."¹⁴⁵ He further amplified this concept when he wrote:

The ministry of the Church is a public ministry [as] indicated by the phrase "of the Church," meaning a group ministry, in contradistinction from an individual ministry. But it is public chiefly because it is a ministry performed in behalf of all, and because it requires the election of any number of fellow Christians to carry out this ministry in behalf of all.¹⁴⁶

Stellhorn made it clear, though, that ministry is the commission of both the invisible and visible Church. He

¹⁴³August C. Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," unpublished essay in the files of the Board for Parish Education, St. Louis, n.d., p. 2.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Ibid.

¹⁴⁶Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 4.

stated, "The ministry of a congregation is the most essential part of the ministry of the Christian Church, of which the local congregation (gathering of believers) is a component part."¹⁴⁷

Finally, it was Stellhorn's belief that:

. . . God has commanded the Church to perform a certain task, but has not prescribed any detailed methods or activities. He has left these to the judgment of His children. Any methods and agencies, therefore, which the Christian Church regards necessary or desirable to carry out the command of the Lord, provided they are in accord with the Word of God, must be regarded as consistent with God's command and indeed the Church's business.¹⁴⁸

Of course, the method or agency that was Stellhorn's lifetime concern was the Christian Lutheran school. It is with the various facets of a Christian Lutheran education--its purposes, curriculum, method, and teachers--that the balance of this study is concerned.

Stellhorn's religious beliefs conformed to strict Missouri Synod orthodoxy. His religiosity conformed to the Christian faith as formulated in the early ecumenical creeds and confessions. While Stellhorn was not a systematic, definitive theologian, he sought to conserve the truth as he viewed it. Among the fundamental truths that his work attested to is that God, in fact, does exist and man as well as all of creation was His handiwork. God reveals Himself

¹⁴⁷Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 2.

¹⁴⁸August C. Stellhorn, "Why the Church Engages in General Education," Parish Education 29 (October 1951): 116.

through this handiwork (e.g., nature), but what is more important, God is revealed through Holy Scripture. Through the inerrant Bible man learns of his origin, his sin, his condemnation under the Law, his utter depravity, and the hopelessness of his existence. Fortunately the Holy Scripture does not center only upon our damnation, but also upon the beautiful Gospel message that all is not lost. Though Stelthorn believed that all of mankind was cursed, he also believed that Scripture revealed God's grace and mercy. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, was sent to redeem man from the curse of the Law through His death and resurrection. Man's atonement has been achieved vicariously and faith in this feat, which comes by the power of God the Holy Spirit, is all that man needs to once again possess the perfection that first man, Adam and Eve, possessed. The perfection will belong to man once he has entered that state of bliss called heaven. It is the duty and function of the Church to share this entire message with the world. This is traditional Missouri Synod orthodoxy, and it is reflected in Stelthorn's theology.

Stelthorn was an educator rather than a theologian. As one focuses on education as it is carried on in The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, one cannot avoid reference to Stelthorn as the Lutheran educational historian. Not only was he called "Mr. Lutheran Schools," but he was also the Synod's most prolific educational historian. What was his philosophy of history? To what educational institutions

and concerns of the Missouri Synod did his historiography address itself? It is to these questions, and others, that the next chapter in this study now turns.

CHAPTER III

STELLHORN'S CONCEPTION OF LUTHERAN EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

August C. Stellohorn was an orthodox Missouri Synod Lutheran. His religious beliefs provided the basis for much of his educational thinking. This chapter presents Stellohorn's conception of Lutheran educational history. Its primary focus will be to examine Stellohorn's philosophy of history as it related to the Synodical educational institutions, concerns, and leaders that were addressed in his historiography.

It has been written that an "historian cannot avoid, and therefore it is better that he should be openly committed to, some philosophy . . ." of history.¹ The historian

. . . should know whether he is a materialist or an idealist, a liberal or a conservative, a religious skeptic or a devotee, a believer in the progress or in the imperfectibility of mankind, in the psychoanalytic or the psychosomatic, the economic or the technological, the geographical or the climatological, the epistemological or the² providential theory of historical interpretation

The historical-philosophical concerns in this chapter will be much more speculative than critical. In

¹ Louis Gottschalk, Understanding History: A Primer of Historical Method, 2nd ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 10.

² Ibid.

other words, while we will comment on Stelthorn's historiographical approach (e.g., his critical philosophy of history), our major thrust will be in the direction of what we viewed as the meaning of Lutheran educational history (e.g., his speculative philosophy of history).

Stelthorn's religious orientation dictated his commitment to the providential theory of educational historical interpretation. Specifically, Stelthorn saw Lutheran educational history as being decreed or in the benevolent guidance of God. Even more succinctly, this writer posits that Stelthorn viewed Lutheran educational history as a manifestation of God's wonderful grace and mercy.

This chapter will extract Stelthorn's philosophy of Lutheran educational history through a chronological treatment of his major articles and books, each of which deal with various educational personages, institutions, or events from the Missouri Synod's past. A clearer vision of Stelthorn's speculative philosophy of Lutheran educational history should be achieved through this treatment.

Stelthorn believed that "history is highly educational . . ." and, consequently, that the professional educational journal of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (then called Lutheran School Journal) "should become a depository for a good deal of our church history, and espe-

cially of our history of education." ³ An understanding of Lutheran educational history was important because:

We are all more or less inclined to think of the past as primitive, imperfect, and simple-minded and of the present as the culmination and perfection of everything that ever was, with ourselves as the culminators and perfecters, forgetting all the while that perhaps each succeeding generation has committed the same mistake and has felt its own importance over preceding generations. This is a sad flaw in the human condition. ⁴

In other words, an understanding of Lutheran educational history functioned to keep Lutheran educators humble. The "value of our school history to . . . teachers . . ." was that it would keep them "humble admirers of" the synod's "forefathers" ⁵

It appeared that Stellhorn also used Lutheran educational history for its inspirational value as he attempted to sell the concept of Lutheran parochial education to the many local congregations and pastors in his role as Secretary of Schools for The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. He wrote:

Look into history and try to evaluate the earnestness and vigor with which congregations and pastors established schools and with what devotion teachers conducted schools with far too many pupils and

³August C. Stellhorn, "Letter to the Editor," Lutheran School Journal 75 (February 1940): 282.

⁴August C. Stellhorn, "Message to the Teachers: Study History - It Keeps You Humble," Lutheran School Journal 67 (June 1932): 463.

⁵Ibid.

practically no salary.⁶

Considering that the above statement was written during the depths of the Depression of the 1930's, Lutheran educational history also contained a message for teachers; namely, that they should stop complaining about class size and meager financial rewards because those who had gone before suffered the same maladies and still maintained their commitment to the Lutheran parish school.

Stellhorn's first published historical writings were a series of ten articles entitled "The Saxon Centennial and the Schools" that appeared in the Lutheran School Journal for the Missouri Synod's centennial year of 1939. The introductory article of this series already shows Stellhorn's speculative philosophy of educational history at work. He stated that the immigration of the Missouri Synod's Saxon forefathers in 1839 "was a great work of God in the making, a work which in time was to embrace us and our children."⁷ The centennial was "a time for self-examination, repentance, and rededication to the spirit and policies of those pioneers. Individuals, congregations, and Synod will pause to see where we stand today and explore the mercies of God to 'be with us as He was with our

⁶Ibid., p. 464.

⁷August C. Stellhorn, "The Saxon Centennial and the Schools: Introduction," Lutheran School Journal 74 (January 1939): 213.

fathers,' 1 Kings 8:57."⁸ This "self-examination, repentance, and rededication" was necessary because:

History teaches that once vigorous church-bodies grow feeble and listless. The Missouri Synod has already passed the usual age of infirmity. By the grace of God it has much strength and integrity left; but for it, too, the shadows are lengthening. It behooves us at this time to inspect the walls of Zion and to rebuild them.⁹

The second installment in Stelthorn's centennial series examined the causes of the 1839 Saxon immigration to America. He wrote that the rationalism of the state church in Saxony at the time was the prime reason for the disenchantment and eventual voyage of the Saxon Lutherans to St. Louis and Perry County, Missouri. More importantly, Stelthorn's providential philosophy was manifested in his belief that the Saxon "emigration was plainly the work of the Lord."¹⁰ For Stelthorn, "The emigrants were simply those Lutherans whom the Lord in His grace gave the faith and spiritual understanding to resist, to condemn, and finally to escape from an intolerable situation at a tremendous sacrifice."¹¹ The "spiritual understanding" provided by God was "the essentials of Christianity and

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰August C. Stelthorn, "The Saxon Centennial and the Schools: I. The Cause of the Saxon Emigration to America," Lutheran School Journal 74 (February 1939): 256.

¹¹Ibid., p. 257.

Lutheranism."¹² It was Stellohorn's contention that the spread of rationalism was the Lord's way of "transplanting a healthy seed of His Church to America."¹³ Besides exploring the causes of the Saxon immigration, this article provided the first inkling of what was to become Stellohorn's life-long admiration for Dr. C. F. W. Walther,¹⁴ the first president of The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States (now The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod). This was reflected by Stellohorn's statement that "In America the old Lutheranism then regained its pristine beauty and purity under the God-given

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Born October 25, 1811, Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther is known in certain Lutheran circles as the "Martin Luther of America." He was the son of a Lutheran pastor who, after his early years of unbelief, became a leader against rationalism in Saxony and later most influential among the Saxon immigrants in Missouri. Walther took an active role in the formation of the Missouri Synod in 1847 and served two terms as its president--1847-1850 and 1864-1878. He was also considerably involved in Lutheran education being an instructor at the Synod's first school of higher learning (the Perry County College) from 1839 to 1841, serving as president of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis from 1849 to 1887, and playing a major role of founder of the St. Louis Lutheran High School in 1867. While Walther is chiefly remembered in Synodical circles as a theologian, it was probably both his theological orthodoxy and his promotion of Christian education on all age levels that endeared him to Stellohorn. Walther died on May 7, 1887.

leadership of . . . Dr. C. F. W. Walther" ¹⁵

In the third segment of his centennial treatise, Stellhorn turned his attention to the formation of the Saxon Lutheran Emigrant Association, the group's departure for America, an extensive statistical treatment of the members who undertook the voyage, and to C. F. W. Walther's diary account of the passage. His view of history as the manifestation of God's grace and mercy was again evidenced in such statements as "If the hand of God was ever shown in any event in history, it was certainly evident in the emigration of the Saxons and subsequent developments in America," ¹⁶ or that it was "divine guidance that caused the other emigrating pastors and candidates to find, and cling to, the much-despised truth." ¹⁷

Evidently Stellhorn's perusal of the names on the passenger lists of the four vessels carrying the Saxon immigrants to America fanned an interest in historical biography, for a month later he published a biographical article on Carl Ludwig Geyer, a Saxon Lutheran theological candidate whom Stellhorn considered as one of the first

¹⁵Stellhorn, "The Saxon Centennial and the Schools: I. The Cause of the Saxon Emigration to America," p. 258.

¹⁶August C. Stellhorn, "The Saxon Centennial and the Schools: II. Departure for America," Lutheran School Journal 74 (March 1939): 294.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 294-295.

Missouri Synod Lutheran teachers.¹⁸ This article also continued to illustrate Stellhorn's previous concept of history, but this concept was expanded so that he saw the Lord leading Geyer "to many a good book" during his stay at the University of Leipzig.¹⁹

Stellhorn's centennial series continued (during the same month) with an article treating the Saxon settlement in Missouri. In it Stellhorn discussed in calendar form the principal events that occurred after the Saxon arrival in St. Louis. He also introduced Martin Stephan, the titular leader of the Saxon immigrants, who was later expelled from the colony on charges of misconduct and mismanagement.²⁰ Stellhorn's treatment of Stephan might cause one to speculate about the source of his interest in history. Martin Stephan had served Stellhorn's boyhood

¹⁸Born March 16, 1812 in Zwickau, Saxony, Carl Ludwig Geyer was a cousin to Dr. C. F. W. Walther. As a candidate for the ministry, he immigrated with the Saxons to Missouri and, because he taught school aboard ship, is considered one of the earliest of Lutheran school teachers. Geyer was ordained as a pastor in 1844 and became the first Saxon Lutheran pastor and missionary in the Territory of Wisconsin. Since Geyer's first parish was at Lebanon, Wisconsin (near Stellhorn's wife's home town of Watertown), one can speculate as to Stellhorn's interest in Geyer. Geyer died on March 6, 1892 having also served parishes in Carlinville, Illinois and Serbin, Texas.

¹⁹August C. Stellhorn, "Carl Ludwig Geyer," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly 12 (April 1939): 5.

²⁰Born August 13, 1777 of Roman Catholic parents who later accepted the Lutheran faith, Martin Stephan was trained as a Lutheran pastor. Because of his fearless proclamation of Lutheran doctrine and his strenuous anti-rationalistic stance, he attained considerable

parish (Trinity, Horse Prairie, Illinois) for several months (September, 1845 to February, 1846) prior to his death and was buried in the congregation's cemetery. One can easily conjure up a picture of young Stellschorn roaming through the grave markers next to Trinity and, upon stumbling across Stephan's, being carried back to his denomination's antecedents.

Stellschorn then focused upon the confusion that followed the expulsion of Martin Stephan from the settlement. Stephan had set himself up as the only head and lord of the colony--one who had divine authority to minister to the people and to appoint their shepherds in church (pastors) and school (teachers). Now Stephan was gone and so, it appeared, was all divine authority. Stellschorn pictured the confusion that resulted and the ensuing

 prominence not only in Saxony, but Germany as a whole. Stephan eventually persuaded a number of pastors and their congregations, or parts of their congregations, as well as many individuals, including theological candidates and teachers, that the only escape from spiritual tyranny would be to immigrate to a foreign country and there go into seclusion as a colony. Stephan's leadership evolved into a dictatorship in spiritual and temporal matters stemming from his rise to power and influence in Germany, and from the willing, grateful submission of his followers to his direction. By common consent even in Germany he had played the role of a bishop and ruler--being generally regarded as everybody's spiritual father. During the voyage to America, the conviction grew in Stephan that he ought to be elected bishop of the Saxon immigrants. This conviction reached fruition on January 15, 1839 when Stephan was elected bishop. The establishment of an episcopacy involved the fundamental doctrines of the church and the ministry--on which the rest of the Saxon pastors were not at all clear. Stephan's office did not last, for on May 30, 1839 he was expelled from the colony, not for doctrinal errors (these were not yet understood), but because of charges of

intensive study of Scripture, Luther's writings, the writings of other churchmen, and the Lutheran confessions. All seemed to be involved: Saxon pastors, teachers, theological candidates, and laymen. The historical meaning of these events again reflected the providential interpretation held by Stelthorn. He concluded that in this episode of Synodical history the "fathers were graciously rescued by the Lord from a very dangerous path in church polity."²¹ The "dangerous path," of course, was in the direction of rejecting Christ as the sole ruler and governor of the Church and instead substituting a man (Stephan) in Christ's place. As Stelthorn viewed it, it was "through the grace of God" that this "great doctrinal uncertainty" among the Saxons "concerning the doctrines of the Church and the ministry, was finally dispelled."²²

It is in his record of this episode that one begins to question the merits of Stelthorn as an historian. One of the documents Stephan employed in his rise to the bishopric

misconduct and mismanagement. He was given the choice of being taken to St. Louis for a trial in court, of returning to Germany, or of leaving the state at once and going wherever he liked. He chose the latter, was supplied with an amount of money, and taken across the Mississippi. From here he went to Kaskaskia, Illinois where he rendered some ministerial service among German immigrants. In the fall of 1845, Trinity Church, Horse Prairie, Illinois called him as its pastor. He died on February 26, 1846 and was buried in the congregation's cemetery. There is still much of this episode that needs to be explained.

²¹August C. Stelthorn, "The Saxon Centennial and the Schools: IV. Rescue from Doctrinal Uncertainty," Lutheran School Journal 74 (May 1939): 390.

²²Ibid., p. 394.

was a document known as "Stephan's Investiture." Stellhorn contended that Walther "was the only one not to sign the pledge of subjection to Stephan" ²³ But Dr. August R. Suelflow, Director of the Concordia Historical Institute and a warm personal friend of Stellhorn, relates that:

Dr. Stellhorn had nothing but the deepest and profoundest admiration for C. F. W. Walther. Consequently, I am quite certain, that even to his dying day he did not accept the documentary evidence for the fact that his hero had signed the document known as "Stephan's Investiture." ²⁴

Suelflow continues: "On one occasion I had showed Dr. Stellhorn the actual document in order to prove my point. There was his signature! But the good doctor immediately replied, without hesitation: 'That's a forgery!'" ²⁵ It would appear that Stellhorn's historiography suffered, at least in this instance, from the pitfall of hero-worship.

The next two segments of Stellhorn's history do not illuminate his philosophy of history. One is merely a translation by Stellhorn of an earlier work dealing with Walther's ideas on the parochial school written by E. A. W. Krauss (one of Stellhorn's instructors at the Addison Teachers Seminary). The other attempted to deal

²³Ibid., p. 391.

²⁴August R. Suelflow, Director of the Concordia Historical Institute and for many years a friend of Stellhorn, to William C. Rietschel, St. Louis, Missouri, 17 October 1977, Personal Files of William C. Rietschel, Oak Park, Illinois.

²⁵Ibid.

with early school developments in St. Louis following the establishment of the Saxon colony. It presented some of the early Synodical teachers as well as a discussion of two of the first parish educational institutions at Trinity (the mother parish of all Missouri Synod Lutheran congregations) and Holy Cross in St. Louis.

Stellhorn's eighth centennial installment continued his previous treatment, but concentrated heavily on subsequent developments at Trinity in St. Louis. In essence, it explained the continued movement of Trinity's lower and upper schools from building to building and from site to site in St. Louis as well as treating the continuous progression of the names of teachers and their starting and terminating dates. Amid all this pedantry, Stellhorn did paint a picture of commitment to the concept of a Christian Lutheran education among the early Saxons and of a steady growth in the numbers of children enrolled in their early educational institutions. According to Stellhorn's interpretation, "education and training, under God's gracious blessings, brought a rich harvest" to the early Saxon Lutherans.²⁶ As he interprets Lutheran educational history, here again Stellhorn sees an active deity.

This somewhat tedious account was continued the following month when Stellhorn submitted the ninth part of

²⁶August C. Stellhorn, "The Saxon Centennial and the Schools: VII. Subsequent Developments in St. Louis," Lutheran School Journal 75 (October 1939): 71.

his centennial history of Lutheran schools, which consisted of three separate lists. The first identified the Missouri Synod Lutheran congregations that existed before the Saxon immigration of 1839. The second consisted of a chronological ordering of Missouri Synod congregations established after the Saxon immigration from 1839 to 1846. The third list provided names and some limited biographical information on some early Synodical teachers who had not been treated in preceding installments. The format used by Stellhorn in his ninth installment showed him to be more of a chronologist than interpretive historian in this particular instance.

The final offering in Stellhorn's ten-part centennial history of Missouri Synod Lutheran schools gave a more definitive view of his speculative philosophy of history--a philosophy that possessed an obvious tinge of the inspirational. In this final installment, Stellhorn confided that it is

True, 'tis distance that lends enchantment to the view," or, as some one has said, "the closer you come to a great man, the smaller he gets." It is true we are inclined to paint personages and events of history in their rosiest colors, omit or overlook weaknesses and somber aspects, and hold the product up to ourselves and our own generation for purposes of admiration and emulation. Nevertheless, history is no mere glorification of men and events. If nothing worthwhile or nothing of consequence, either positively or negatively, has happened, it will not make the pages of history. Least of all is our own early history an attempt to glorify man and his deeds. It is honestly recorded. Much like the divinely revealed and inspired history of the Bible, it is not silent on the weaknesses and shortcomings of the fathers, and yet it is so packed with excellencies that the whole of it is a grand picture of God's particular grace which commands

admiration and invites the heart to desire continuation, repossession, or repetition.²⁷

Several minor criticisms can be directed against Stellhorn's method of historical research and writing. His unwillingness to indicate that Walther signed the pledge to Stephan reveals a tendency to minor distortion by way of omitting an historical fact. Perhaps, it was Stellhorn's inability to accept the fact that his hero made a mistake in supporting Stephan that caused him to judge Walther's signature as a forgery. Also Stellhorn showed himself to be less than critical when he compared Missouri Synod history to inspired Biblical history. Despite Stellhorn's tendency to be uncritical as an historian, it is his sense of the Providential force of God moving through history that is most apparent.

In spite of his cautions about glorifying men and events, Stellhorn maintained that Missouri Synod Lutherans had "every reason to reflect upon the past and learn what it really is to which we should rededicate ourselves."²⁸ This rededication could best be

. . . obtained by developing an enduring respect for our founding fathers, for their attitude and spirit, for their action despite the great obstacles, for the great work that God wrought in a period of special grace, and then by pleading with God for the same grace and mercy to perform our task in these definitely unfavorable and

²⁷ August C. Stellhorn, "The Saxon Centennial and the Schools: IX. Reflections upon the Past," Lutheran School Journal 75 (December 1939): 164.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 165-166.

particularly evil times.²⁹

The inspirational source for Stellohorn's philosophy of history appeared to be contained in one primary dimension; namely, his religious orientation. He wrote:

What was it that inspired our founding fathers above everything else? The answer is: The rediscovery and the reassertion of orthodox Lutheranism or, as they also called it, "the true Lutheran faith." The fathers and most of their early congregations came out of a veritable Sodom and Gomorrah of doctrinal adultery and to a large extent out of great spiritual tribulation. They were themselves at first, even in America, "still sadly deficient in the true knowledge; many and dangerous errors darkening their souls." (Walther, *Casualpredigten*, p. 176) So when they came to the knowledge of truth as revealed in Scripture and found the purity of the Lutheran faith confessed and defended, with all error in Biblical doctrine rejected and condemned, in the writings of Lutner, in the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church, and in the works of great Lutheran theologians, all so uniformly Scriptural and convincing, they became as happy children and never ceased to thank God and praise Him for His unspeakable mercy through Jesus Christ.³⁰

It was Stellohorn's proud historical pronouncement that,

Out of this God-given attitude developed the strict orthodoxy of the "Missourians," which countenanced no compromise, flayed opposing errorists courageously, and in time won victory upon victory, even over whole synods.

But it was not the mere novelty of having unearthed once more the whole treasure of the Reformation and building up an orthodox Lutheran Church in America and in the wilds of heterodoxy in this land. No; there was a much deeper background, a much stronger motive. Through that same "pure Lutheran faith" they had come to be very earnest, but joyous Christians, deeply conscious of, and penitent over, their sins and unworthiness before God but happy in the sure knowledge of the forgiveness of sins through the grace of God in Christ. This led to a new, unqualified obedience of God and His

²⁹Ibid., p. 166.

³⁰Ibid.

Word, to genuine fear, love, and trust in God. Their power, determination, and influence toward the outside . . . came from an unshakable faith and conviction within. In other words, they were interested in orthodoxy because they had tasted and experienced it in their own hearts; it had given them the comfort, the light, and the joy which they had sought elsewhere in vain.³¹

One wonders how so much in interpretative historical rhetoric could come from such little historical data. One also questions the validity of Stellhorn's reflections when the balance of the series reveals such little effort spent on the schools. In fact, it seems almost an afterthought when Stellhorn finally comments that "To avoid the pitfalls of other Lutheran and Protestant bodies," the Saxons "built up a stronger line of defense and offense, and the key institution for them was the parochial full-time school."³² It was to the historic ideal of the full-time parochial school that Stellhorn devoted his entire professional life and to which he channeled his historiography, but unfortunately his amateur approach permeated his first serious attempt at educational history. His work tended to be poorly organized and heavily anecdotal in nature. That Stellhorn was a novice was all too evident. Also, Stellhorn may have been somewhat of a presentist. That is, he used history to support his already formed belief in Lutheran parochial schools.

Evidently Stellhorn's first attempt at biography

³¹Ibid., pp. 166-167.

³²Ibid., p. 168.

(i.e., the 1939 article on Carl Ludwig Geyer) intrigued him, for his next historical undertaking focused on J. C. W. Lindemann, the first director of Stellhorn's beloved Addison Teachers Seminary from 1864 to 1879.³³ This article, published in 1941 in the Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, was well-organized, reasonably comprehensive, and painted a rather favorable picture of Lindemann's life and contributions to the Synod. It dealt with Lindemann's ancestry, his childhood youth, his early years as a young tradesman (cabinetmaker), his pedagogical preparation, his coming to America, his first teaching position, his years as a pastor, and finally, his directorship of the Synod's Addison Teachers Seminary. In addition, it outlined Lindemann's literary activity, especially his role as the first editor of the Evangelisch-Lutherisches Schulblatt (Evangelical Lutheran School Journal). More importantly, for the purposes of this chapter, the article was filled with indications of Stellhorn's historical frame of reference. For example, early in the article, when Stellhorn discussed Lindemann's

³³Born January 6, 1827, in Goettingen, Hanover, Germany, Rev. J. C. W. Lindemann was initially trained in pedagogy at the Hanover Teachers Seminary. He arrived in Baltimore, Maryland on July 6, 1848 and there taught school at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. In 1852, Lindemann entered the Missouri Synod's Fort Wayne, Indiana Seminary to prepare as a pastor. A year later he was called to Cleveland, Ohio as an assistant pastor at Zion Lutheran Church and later as pastor to nearby Trinity Lutheran Church. Lindemann was called to the directorship of the Addison Teachers Seminary in 1864 and died on January 15, 1879 while serving in that capacity.

initial move to Roman Catholicism and his rather hasty reconversion to Lutheranism, he saw an active God at work in Lindemann's religious life. This becomes apparent as Stellhorn summarized Lindemann's conversion to Lutheranism in the following words: ". . . God had plans of using [Lindemann] elsewhere and as a great blessing to His true Church and therefore soon proceeded to open the eyes of the deceived but truth-seeking young man."³⁴ A bit later, in his discussion of the events surrounding Lindemann's immigration to the United States, Stellhorn commented that "God had called Lindemann to America in a wonderful manner"³⁵ Still later, in a treatment of Lindemann's directorship of the Addison Teachers Seminary, Stellhorn assessed that "God intended to commit a larger sphere of activity to this highly gifted and faithful servant"³⁶ and it was the Lord, as he viewed it, who had reared Lindemann "for the position, as it were, from childhood."³⁷ Each of these, together with other statements in the article, make a strong case for believing that Stellhorn interpreted history as a record of God's providence.

Between 1941 and 1946, there occurred a five-year

³⁴August C. Stellhorn, "J. C. W. Lindemann," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly 14 (October 1941): 70.

³⁵Ibid., p. 76.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 80-81.

³⁷Ibid., p. 82.

hiatus in Stellhorn's production of historical treatises on Lutheran education. One may speculate that the demands of his position as Secretary of Schools for The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod was the primary cause. The Missouri Synod Lutheran schools were just beginning to recover from the enrollment declines of the Depression and it was not until after World War II that a renewal of interest in Lutheran education caused remarkable enrollment increases. Consequently, it was in 1946 that Stellhorn began a flurry of historical writing that brought on seven major articles, a chapter in a yearbook, and two books by 1963.

Following this five-year respite, Stellhorn's next historical writing was an article on the Perry County College--again for the Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly. In it Stellhorn clarified a misconception held by many in Synod at the time. Such people believed the venerable old institution was the Synod's first theological seminary. A tedious examination of the appropriate minutes of Trinity Church, St. Louis (the supporting body of the so-called "college" at the time of its inception), led Stellhorn to the institution's recorded written objectives and the correct conclusion that the "college" really was a Lutheran elementary and high school (academy). The somewhat disjointed article once again displayed Stellhorn's predilection for listing names and providing anecdotal information, but it contained no reference to a philosophy of history.

Evidently enamored of his centennial history of Lutheran schools in 1939, Stellhorn returned to a similar format in 1947 to commemorate the 1847 signing of the first constitution of the Missouri Synod. This brief article, published by the Lutheran School Journal purported to assess the Synodical school situation in 1847, but half of it was a discussion of teachers who were present at this first convention of the Synod. Perhaps it was the issue of Synodical and District franchise for teachers that caused Stellhorn to believe that "Teachers of our time are naturally interested to know something about this matter."³⁸ After a brief sketch of the three teachers in attendance, Stellhorn turned his attention to the primary thrust of the article and briefly explored some school statistics from 1847. This was followed by an equally brief treatment of the economic, social, and political milieu of the period together with a few words on the state of Synodical teacher training at the time of the convention. This latter treatment led Stellhorn to the observation that "our school system had a very humble beginning."³⁹ But even in this "humble beginning" Stellhorn saw God at work in Synodical school history as evidenced again by a speculative

³⁸August C. Stellhorn, "The School Situation in 1847," Lutheran School Journal 82 (May 1947): 392. Missouri Synod teachers, to this day, are not ordinarily permitted to vote at either Synodical or District conventions; many remain restive under this restraint.

³⁹Ibid., p. 394.

philosophy which concluded that it was "the Lord" who "moved the founding fathers to look . . . diligently after the education of their children."⁴⁰

The 1847 centennial fervor was not just Stellschorn's. The Lutheran Education Association published its fourth yearbook in 1947 under the title, 100 Years of Christian Education. Stellschorn contributed the first chapter, "The Period of Organization, 1838-1847." Because the chapter was limited to a specific time period, Stellschorn's research must have been simplified considerably, for this was the era to which the majority of his historiographical attention had been devoted. Interestingly, he had become more sophisticated. The amateurish aspects of his prior historical endeavors largely disappeared. Stellschorn integrated much of his previous material into a well-organized chapter that avoided his previously narrow historical parochialism. It did so by first painting a broad picture of the social, political, economic, and educational milieu of the period as well as by tracing the evolution of Lutheranism prior to the Saxon immigration. Then followed a well-written, incisive commentary on the early Saxons, their parish schools (including descriptions of buildings, classroom schedules, textbooks, curriculum, and teachers), and finally, their institutions of higher learning. While Stellschorn manifested both a bit of

⁴⁰Ibid.

Cubberley-Monroe provincialism by quoting institutional statistics and his own love of listing teachers accompanied by a plethora of anecdotal data (sometimes bordering on historical trivia), his overall effort was reasonably well-done. The chapter once again also manifested his providential view of history. Stellhorn culminates his twenty-seven page endeavor in a summation of the forefather's educational work that affirmed that:

. . . the Lord strengthened true Lutheran faith on American soil by giving the Church new leaders, who built firmly for a staunch Lutheranism in America. He gave the founding fathers of the Missouri Synod the insight to provide diligently, despite all poverty, for the proper schooling of the laity and for the training of orthodox pastors and teachers.⁴¹

His pride in a strict Lutheran orthodoxy and his guiding historical perspective of a deity active in Synodical school history were both most apparent.

Until the late 1940's, Stellhorn had showed little interest in the history of Lutheran secondary education. Perhaps it was the fact that his father had attended the first St. Louis Lutheran High School or that he was spurred on by the tremendous growth of Lutheran secondary education after 1945 that found Stellhorn in 1948 setting his historical sights on the subject. On April 30th of that year, Stellhorn read the first part of a three-part paper

⁴¹August C. Stellhorn, "The Period of Organization, 1838-1847," in 100 Years of Christian Education, Fourth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association, ed. Arthur C. Repp, chap. 1 (River Forest, Illinois: Lutheran Education Association, 1947), pp. 28-29.

entitled "Lutheran Secondary Education in St. Louis" at the meeting of the St. Louis Chapter of the Concordia Historical Institute. The subsequent portions were read to the same body on December 3, 1948 and October 4, 1949. Lutheran Education (formerly Lutheran School Journal) published these three segments in its October, 1948, March, 1949 and February, 1950 issues respectively. The three articles began by exploring the antecedents of Martin Luther and the Synodical fathers in America. They emphasized the great stress that Luther and the Synodical fathers laid on a complete formal education of Christians. Stelthorn saw both the early Perry County College and the later Concordia College in St. Louis as strong manifestations of this type of general Lutheran Christian education. He continued this theme in his treatment of the move of Concordia's college department to Fort Wayne, Indiana and the ensuing move of the latter's preparatory department to the former's campus. Stelthorn then shifted to the story of the establishment of the Saxons' English private school and finally, to an extensive treatment of the aborted birth of the first Lutheran high school in St. Louis and a heavy emphasis on the involvement of his hero, C. F. W. Walther, in the eventual triumph. The composition displayed many typical Stelthorn historiographical characteristics (e.g., considerable anecdotalism, an encyclopedic attention to detail that bordered on the trivial, and an extensive supplying of biographical data on the fathers that made for

cumbersome reading) and uncharacteristically, no testimony to his speculative interpretation of the events marking the inception of Missouri Synod secondary education in America.

Stellhorn's next step into Lutheran educational history was a sketch entitled, "Dr. Theodore Graebner and the School Crisis of 1920" published in the February, 1951 issue of Parish Education (the successor to his famous News Service).⁴² Though the article marked Stellhorn's first attempt to deal with an individual he knew or an event that he had actually experienced in his lifetime, it was more of a commemorative tribute to Graebner who had died a few months earlier (November 14, 1950) and consequently ranked as a rather unimportant segment in Stellhorn's career as a Lutheran educational historian. Simply, it was a warm exploration of Graebner's role in calling the Synod's attention to the critical straits of Lutheran schools after World War I. In it, Stellhorn discussed the anti-German sentiment, the effort to destroy private and parochial schools through school language legislation, and declining enrollments. Its primary focus appeared to be the impact of a 1920 Graebner article which resulted in having the Synod at its 1920 Detroit convention authorize the establishment

⁴²Born November 23, 1876, in Watertown, Wisconsin, Theodore Conrad Graebner served the Missouri Synod in a number of capacities. First as a teacher from 1897-1902, later as a parish pastor from 1902-1914, and from 1914-1950 as a professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and editor of the Lutheran Witness (a Missouri Synod publication for the laity). He died on November 14, 1950.

of "the General School Board" and the calling of a "full-time Executive Secretary" (Stellhorn eventually) as well as the issuance of "some very general instructions concerning the upbuilding and maintenance of" an elementary Lutheran school system.⁴³ In the final analysis, perhaps the article was more of an expression of gratitude for Graebner's indirect role in establishing the office in which Stellhorn served the Missouri Synod for nearly forty years. Regardless of its intent, the brief treatise again reflected Stellhorn's conception of a deity active in history and in the lives of men who made history. The opening sentence of his commemoration clearly indicated this as Stellhorn judged that "History will point to Dr. Theordore Graebner . . . as the man in our Synod whom the Lord moved to cry for action in a critical hour."⁴⁴ He closed the sketch by reflecting the same providential dimension in making the assessment that, after the crisis had subsided, it was clear that "our elementary schools were preserved for us by the Lord"⁴⁵

Stellhorn's next historiographical attempt was also a subject with which he had considerable first-hand knowledge. The article, "Development of Synod's Promotion

⁴³August C. Stellhorn, "Dr. Theodore Graebner and the School Crisis of 1920," Parish Education 29 (February 1951): 21.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 20.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 21.

of Parish Education During the Past Thirty Years," was published in the September, 1951 issue of Lutheran Education. The events leading to the publication of the article began at the April 16, 1951 meeting of the Board for Parish Education, where they took cognizance of the fact that Stellhorn had accepted his position as Secretary of Schools thirty years prior. The Board requested that Stellhorn review the development of Synod's promotion of parish education during his thirty-year tenure at its May 20th plenary meeting. Stellhorn complied and the review was later requested for publication by the editors of Lutheran Education.

The article itself appeared to be a story of the efforts of men and of the ways of the Lord to preserve and bless His kingdom. In it, Stellhorn traced the school situation in Synod prior to and just following World War I, the movement within the Missouri Synod to establish supervisory provisions through the establishment of District superintendencies, a retelling of Graebner's impact upon the 1920 Detroit Synodical Convention, the events leading to Stellhorn's call as Secretary of Schools (which have been already discussed in Chapter I of this study), and finally, an analysis of the School Board's duties, role, and impact involving all types and levels of parish education from 1921 to 1951. Stellhorn's active and intimate personal involvement in the developments discussed as well as his anecdotal tendencies were obvious. Most important for the

purposes of this chapter was his evident conception of a personal God actively at work in Synod's past. For example, Stellsborn's treatment of the ravages of war hysteria, public opinion against everything German or of German origin, and Graebner's article were all viewed as means by which the Lord aroused His people.⁴⁶

To this juncture, Stellsborn's historical endeavors were primarily journalistic. Evidently his published report on developments in Synod's parochial education promotional activities fueled a desire for a more ambitious undertaking. In 1956, Concordia Publishing House printed Stellsborn's first book (really more of a pamphlet) entitled History of the Superintendents Conference: Supervision and Promotion of Christian Education by The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.⁴⁷ The book was simply a sketch of the work and development of the Superintendents Conference (now the

⁴⁶August C. Stellsborn, "Development of Synod's Promotion of Parish Education During the Past Thirty Years," Lutheran Education 87 (September 1951): 15.

⁴⁷Organized February 25, 1921 in Chicago, the Superintendents Conference originally consisted of five charter members--the Superintendents of the following Synodical Districts: Iowa, Northern Illinois, the Western District, South Wisconsin, and the Central District (Stellsborn). The purposes were given as cooperation, exchange of ideas and experiences, mutual encouragement and suggestions, and coordination of efforts in behalf of Missouri Synod parochial education. Today the organization is known as the Conference of Educational Executives in which also the Board for Parish education of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod has representation, but while being a much larger and more diversified body than the original, it still possesses the same fundamental purposes. Stellsborn became an ex officio member of the group when he assumed his position of Secretary of Schools on April 5, 1921.

Conference of Educational Executives) over a period of thirty-five years (1921-1956). In it, one again senses Stellsborn's strong commitment to a philosophy of history that viewed the benevolent guidance of his God functioning graciously in Synodical educational history. For example, after he traced the struggle of Missouri Synod schools during the 1930's, Stellsborn concluded that "the school system was, by the grace of God, well sustained during the economic depression . . . and has seen its greatest expansion since 1940."⁴⁸ His providential interpretation of Synodical educational history was even more clearly reflected in the conclusion of the manuscript. Stellsborn wrote:

The development of synodical supervision and promotion, as briefly sketched in these pages, is again something which makes the Christian exclaim: "What hath God wrought!" Yes, the Lord used His human instruments, but it is He who guided and inspired Synod and the Districts to do that which lies before us today as an open book of His grace and providence in the field of Christian education within Synod.⁴⁹

One again senses Stellsborn's commitment to orthodoxy and to his belief that God was at work in Missouri Synod school history and in the personages instrumental in the making of that history.

Stellsborn's final journal offerings of an historical

⁴⁸August C. Stellsborn, History of the Superintendents Conference: Supervision and Promotion of Christian Education by The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), p. 40.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 41.

nature were written in 1957 and 1958. The first, a brief treatise on "Teacher Training Prior to 1857" in the Missouri Synod and published in the February, 1957 issue of Lutheran Education, was in commemoration of the Synod's Fort Wayne Convention of 1857, wherein the first "Schullehrer-Seminar" (teachers seminary) was established. But the primary thrust of the article was to argue convincingly that teacher training existed in the Synod prior to 1857. Consequently, Stellhorn devoted his energy toward proving that there were forms of pedagogical preparation prior to 1857 at the Saxons' Perry County College, the Synod's Concordia College in St. Louis, and later at its Fort Wayne, Indiana, Seminary. Stellhorn offered no further insights into his philosophy of educational history in this article, but his subsequent offering re-affirmed his concept of the Prime Mover in the Missouri Synod's past.

Essentially, "The Early Teacher Graduates: The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod," which was printed in the April, 1958 issue of Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly was an extension and further elaboration of the previous offering. In it, Stellhorn presented lists of teacher graduates from Concordia Seminary (1857-1864). To further stimulate the reader, Stellhorn expanded his lists to include students who transferred from Milwaukee to Fort Wayne when Milwaukee closed its doors on November 10, 1857, a list of students who transferred from Fort Wayne to

Addison during the summer of 1864 when the Addison Teachers Seminary became (for the time being) the sole institution for the preparation of pedagogues for the Synod, and finally, a list of those Fort Wayne students who did not go into teaching. Stellhorn concluded his epistle with brief biographical sketches of a selected number of individuals from his previous lists. Considering the tedious and non-substantive fashion in which the article was constructed, one wonders how Stellhorn could comment that

The record of early teacher graduates, herewith presented . . . is in itself a testimony to the glory of God and the foresight He gave our fathers to look after the training of reliable, well-indoctrinated Lutheran teachers.⁵⁰

Suffice it to say that he did. If nothing else, the words again reflected that same historical perspective that permeated so much of Stellhorn's writing.

As Stellhorn's literary activities are traced and the significant shift from a heavy promotional focus to an emphasis on Lutheran educational history is noted after World War II, it appears that the final one third (twenty-six years) of his life was directed toward a single, climactic contribution to The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Perhaps, in a sense, that was how Stellhorn viewed his culminating literary contribution to the Synod he had so long and unselfishly served. His Schools of The Lutheran

⁵⁰August C. Stellhorn, "The Early Teacher Graduates: The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly 31 (April 1958): 3.

Church - Missouri Synod was published in 1963, a year before his death.

The Synod's Board of Parish Education had since 1939 wished to publish a history of Missouri Synod schools. At that time, Dr. Walter H. Beck of Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska, had published a history of the schools of most of the Lutheran synods in America. The Board requested him to expand the section on the schools of the Missouri Synod and thus write a more elaborate history of the schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. However, Dr. Beck felt that the Board should appoint someone in St. Louis who would have more ready access to the sources, and he therefore declined. Thereupon the Board requested Stellhorn to prepare a manuscript, but (as is so typical in Synodical circles) it failed to give him the necessary time. Consequently, Stellhorn's work load impeded any attempt to write a complete history, but (as his archival collection indicates) he did begin to accumulate sources. These sources, in turn, resulted in the publication of smaller, rather confined, historical treatises already explored in this chapter.

In September, 1957, the Board of Parish Education reviewed its request and this time officially commissioned Stellhorn to write the history of the schools of the Missouri Synod. In order to facilitate his efforts, the Board suggested that one half of Stellhorn's office time be devoted to this work. He completed most of the research and

writing during the years 1959 and 1960, while completing his tenure as Secretary of Schools. Revisions and final touches to the manuscript were added after his retirement on December 31, 1960.

The end result is a meticulous, detailed, and encyclopedic history of education in the Missouri Synod. Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod was divided into seven parts. The first part, "Education Through the Ages," consisting of one chapter, gave a broad historical introduction to the book. Part II dealt with "Laying the Foundations of the Missouri Synod." In five chapters Stelhorn told about the Northwest Territory, the work of F. C. D. Wyneken,⁵¹ the Saxons in Missouri, the steps leading to the formation of the Synod, and the organization called "Die Deutsche Evangelisch-Lutherische Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten" (The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States).

The next four parts each dealt with a quarter of a century in the history of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Part III (1847-1872) ended with an account of the

⁵¹Born May 13, 1810, at Verden, Hanover, Germany, Friedrich Conrad Dietrich Wyneken, as a young theological candidate immigrated to Baltimore, Maryland in 1838. He was not part of the Saxon group, but rather is best known for his circuit-riding activities as a minister among German Lutherans in the Northwest Territory. While working among these groups he learned of the Saxon Lutherans, established and maintained contact with them because of his compatible theological position, joined the Synod when it was founded in 1847, and became the second President of the Missouri Synod from 1850 to 1864. Wyneken died on May 4, 1876.

Synod's twenty-fifth anniversary. Part IV (1872-1897) examined the development of the educational system, including the adverse legislation in this period, and secondary education. Part V (1897-1922) then spanned the quarter of a century that included World War I. Part VI (1922-1947) brought the century to a close after a sketch of the general Synodical developments, the boards of education and their executives, and chapters dealing with textbooks, curriculum, and teacher training. In Part VII (1947-1961), which consisted of three chapters, Stellhorn dealt with the fourteen years he was unable to include in his quarter century format.

It has been suggested earlier in this chapter that Stellhorn was somewhat of an historiographical novice. Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, though it provided a great deal of information in its 507 pages, which have supplied a rich mine for those interested in the schools of the Missouri Synod, once again reflected Stellhorn's limitations as an educational historian. He used comparatively few manuscript sources. The abundant resources of the Concordia Historical Institute remained relatively untouched. One must also call into question Stellhorn's division of history into quarter centuries. Periodization is necessary in the telling of history; however, the periods cannot be divided into convenient centuries or, as in this case, into convenient quarters. Evidently Stellhorn thought it propitious to divide history

in this fashion, but it is unfortunate that he did not use the periodization employed in 100 Years of Christian Education (e.g., "The Period of Organization, 1847-1864," "The Period of Expansion, 1864--1894," "The Period of Assimilation, 1894-1914," and "The Period of "Integration, 1914-1947"), the volume to which he contributed the opening chapter, or that he did not use a similar organizational scheme.

Throughout the text Stellhorn frequently disclosed his intimate personal involvement in the making of Lutheran school history. As teacher, principal, District Superintendent, and finally, as Secretary of Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, he personally lived through much of the history he recorded. As a teacher he experienced the pressures of the first World War, as a school executive, the unfriendly legislation of the 1920's, the depression of the thirties, World War II, and the serious teacher shortage resulting from a rapid school expansion which began in the forties. This intimate perspective might explain why so much of this work (as well as his previous endeavors) contained some anecdotal matters which could well have been eliminated in favor of more important developments. For example, the impact of World War I in the process of Americanization of the Missouri Synod is not evident from the pages of this book. There is a great deal of imbalance in the book. The defunct Lutheran academies (e.g., the Perry County College, Concordia College

in St. Louis, the Private English school, etc.) in the 1850's received ample space. However, the founding of the Lutheran High School in Milwaukee in 1903 or of Luther Institute in Chicago (the mother institution of Lutheran high schools in the Chicago area) in 1909 are not even noticed. The tremendous movement in Lutheran secondary education after 1945 is virtually neglected. The Lutheran Education Association is mentioned merely as being instrumental in the formation of the National Lutheran Parent-Teacher League.⁵²

Also evident in Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod was a parochial celebrationism similar to that of Cubberley and Monroe's interpretation of American public education.⁵³ One could speculate that Stelthorn's celebrationism was influenced by Cubberley because he was

⁵²Organized in 1953 as a department of the Lutheran Education Association (LEA), the National Lutheran Parent-Teacher League (NLPTL) works with existing local parent-teacher groups and sponsors additional groups. The services to local groups includes provisions for study materials and attempts to bring the home and school into closer relationship. The department relationship with the LEA was discontinued in 1959. Today local NLPTL branches number approximately 650, the majority serving congregations with schools and their pastors, principals, teachers, and directors of Christian education.

⁵³Ellwood P. Cubberley (1868-1941) and Paul Monroe (1869-1947) were two early Twentieth Century educational historians whose writing has been called "celebrationist" by their critics. Their approach to educational historiography "celebrates" the evolution of the American public school as the greatest enlightening agent in the world. They viewed American public education as a major means of bringing about value consensus, as the principal agent of upward social and economic mobility, and as the great assimilator of

the ranking educational historian until approximately 1950 and also that Stellhorn listed Cubberley's 1934 text, Public Education in the United States, in his secondary source material (together with Boyer's 1919 edition of History of Education and Good's 1956 edition of A History of American Education). It is probably more accurate to posit that Stellhorn's parochial celebrationism (e.g., the remarkable growth of the historic ideal of Lutheran parish schools) was much more deeply influenced by his religious orthodoxy, his concept of God, and his related providential philosophy of history that evolved from these elements and which was so clearly manifested in so many of his previous historiographical attempts.

An active, benevolent God at work in Missouri Synod history and in Synodical school history specifically permeated the pages of Stellhorn's culminating contribution. From the outset, his philosophical perspective perceived "The foundations of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod" as being "laid by men in circumstances under God's providence . . ." ⁵⁴ and the Lord leading these men "to conceive the idea of forming a new synod." ⁵⁵ Stellhorn's historical love affair with C. F. W. Walther was partially

immigrants. Simply, their approach to doing educational history was inspirational.

⁵⁴August C. Stellhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), p. 21.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 40.

premised on the view that Walther "was . . . the instrument of the Lord in the making of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and its educational system."⁵⁶ He saw the early synodical action on behalf of schools as manifesting the hand of the Lord.⁵⁷ "The second quarter century, 1872-97, is characterized by a remarkable growth of the Synod under the gracious blessings of the Lord" ⁵⁸

The specific school history treated in Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod contained the same philosophy applied to Lutheran education. Stelhorn believed that "The Lord gave the church great gifts" in the early faculty members of the Addison Teachers Seminary.⁵⁹ The adverse school legislation of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was viewed as the Lord seeing a need to arouse "His people from a growing lethargy concerning the schools, and of inspiring them toward greater efforts in the establishment and improvement of them."⁶⁰ It was a benevolent deity that "richly blessed the deliberations and actions of" the Conference of Educational Executives "over the years and made it a vital factor in the promotion of Christian schools and all other

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 67.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 72.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 219.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 226.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 246.

forms of Christian education."⁶¹ Finally, "the school system had been revived and greatly strengthened, so that, by the grace of God, it successfully weathered the depression of the thirties and has experienced a great expansion since 1940."⁶² Again, as with his previous historical writing, God's benevolence reigned supreme and would continue to do so as long as the Missouri Synod would

. . . not waver at any time in its determination to adhere to pure doctrine and Scriptural practice in the life of the church and in the life of the individual member; because history teaches that those church bodies which have firm doctrinal convictions are the ones who are most intent upon the proper education and training of their membership--specifically by means of full-time schools.⁶³

Although August Stellhorn was not trained as a professional historian, he did contribute to the history of Lutheran education. His commitment to a providential theory of historical interpretation grounded in his Missouri Synod orthodoxy is also vividly clear. As a prominent spokesman for the cause of Lutheran education in the United States, this orthodox religious grounding was also most apparent. Therefore, the next chapter will review and discuss Stellhorn's conception of the purposes of Lutheran education against the backdrop of his Missouri Synod theology.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 299.

⁶²Ibid., p. 486.

⁶³Ibid., p. 488.

CHAPTER IV

STELLHORN'S CONCEPTION OF THE PURPOSES

OF LUTHERAN EDUCATION

In the preceding chapters, it has been established that Stellhorn's early years as Secretary of Schools for The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod were devoted primarily to promoting Lutheran parochial education. During this period (1921-1945) he wrote numerous articles and essays which argued the case for Christian Lutheran education. These efforts demonstrated a consistent conception of what Stellhorn viewed as the principal purposes of Christian Lutheran education and it is to an examination of these purposes that this chapter will be devoted.

Before exploring Stellhorn's conception of the purposes of a Lutheran education, one needs to understand his definition of education as well as what he believed to be the agencies of education. Because man is by nature spiritual and religious, Stellhorn believed that "Education is primarily a matter of the soul."¹ Accordingly, it is a misconception to view education purely as a matter of acquiring knowledge, as an exercising and disciplining of

¹August C. Stellhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1928), p. 5.

the mind, or as a secular affair.² Stellhorn wrote:

. . . education is a much-abused term. Quite commonly it is taken as the accumulation of secular knowledge. The more a person has learned, the more highly educated he is. Wrong. We may call him a learned man. It is only when his learning, training, or experience has made him a desirable and useful man, that he may be considered educated. And, then, education consists least of all in the accumulation of secular knowledge, although very many people understand nothing further under the term education.³

Stellhorn also distinguished between education and schooling. Education was not to be thought of as only an affair of the school.

Schooling and education are terms that are taken too much as synonymous. The sooner and more completely we disabuse ourselves of this idea, the better. The school is only a factor in education; education goes on as long as we live, both in and out of school. For the school-child and the college-student it goes on, not only in the classroom, but on the playground and in the dormitories as well; not only by the influence of textbooks and teachers, but also by the influence of classmates and the ever-present surroundings.⁴

As can be seen, Stellhorn's large view of education was quite contemporary yet he did not say that acquiring secular knowledge, disciplining the mind, and schooling were excluded from the meaning of education. They were not because

. . . an education is indeed acquired in schools, though not solely; is also the acquisition of knowledge, though not principally; includes mind discipline, though that is not its main object; is also secular, though not only

²Ibid., pp. 3-4.

³August C. Stellhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin XI (November 1, 1930): 7.

⁴Ibid.

such; is also a matter of mind and body, though not mainly.⁵

The mistake, according to Stellhorn, was centered in the fact that these are mere phases of education, not education itself.⁶

It will become apparent shortly that Stellhorn's basic definition of education focused almost exclusively on man becoming a true Christian. One may safely assume that the criteria for true Christianity can be found in Stellhorn's religious orientation as outlined in Chapter II of this study. While there were many organized and unorganized educational influences upon man, the only educational agencies that could result in man becoming truly Christian were the Christian home, the Christian Church, and the Christian school. Surprisingly, Stellhorn deviated from typical educational theory and viewed the home and the Church as well as the school as formal (rather than informal) educational agencies in contradistinction to viewing the school as the only formal educative agency.

As was pointed out in Chapter II, Stellhorn viewed man's spiritual essence (soul) as dwelling in his physical body. Man's soul manifested itself intellectually, emotionally, and volitionally. Combining both the physical body and the spiritual essence, Stellhorn viewed man as

⁵Stellhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 14.

⁶Ibid.

developing "physically, intellectually, emotionally, and volitionally" or in body, mind, heart, and will.⁷ From this combination, Stellhorn defined education as "the entire process of a person's physical, intellectual, and spiritual development, or culture, in so far as this is affected by external influences, on which the person reacts favorably."⁸ Stellhorn explained his definition as follows:

The whole course and series of details which it takes to educate a person, which begins the moment he has the use of his mental faculties and continues as long as that is the case, we call the process of development. This is never interrupted as long as a person lives, except in sleep or in some other state in which man becomes wholly incapacitated and even then it grows on. It is constant. Education, therefore, is not a matter of schools only, but a matter of every-day life, whether in school or out of school, whether obtained from books or common experience.

We call it a process of development, i.e., a development toward something higher and better--culture. The opposite is degradation, a lowering, especially in character. A so-called education that ultimately degrades a person is not really education.

Furthermore, we say that education is the development of the whole body, mind, and spirit. But we add to modification that it is only that development which is affected by external influences on which the person reacts. There is a growth and a development which is not the result of education. Thus, no doubt, our physical body would develop and mature without education⁹

In other words, when Stellhorn spoke of education, he meant both the organized as well as the unorganized educational

⁷August C. Stellhorn, "Christian Education," unpublished essay delivered to the Alberta and British Columbia District, July 1, 1942, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellhorn papers, p. 4.

⁸Stellhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 16.

⁹Ibid.

influences upon man as well as their result. While his view of human development as being uninterrupted and constant appears to violate common sense (e.g., an individual's development experiences many peaks and valleys), Stellohorn insisted that man's development is in part a natural, automatic growth, but constantly affected (hindered or promoted) by influences from without. These influences are both good and bad. A favorable reaction to the good results in education, but a favorable reaction to the bad results in degradation or corruption. In essence, Stellohorn's scheme of things dictated that a favorable reaction to the good influences would eventually overcome the many more bad influences (e.g., temptations to evil) that man was subjected to during his lifetime. Specifically, a favorable reaction to good influences (e.g., pious Christian parents, a Christian education, etc.) would result in man being a true Christian. For Stellohorn, the total of development and growth in the right direction (true Christianity) insofar as it was not natural or automatic but was brought about by good influences from without, was to be called a person's education.

The process of development (or education) was concerned, then, with two factors: "the person and the external influences brought to bear upon him; the person with all his natural abilities and tendencies and the external influences in all their forms and

characteristics."¹⁰ In discussing the educational process, Stellsborn built upon his view of the three dimensions of man's soul--the intellectual, the emotional, and the volitional. While man's physical essence played a part, it was the head, the heart, and the will that were the key elements in the educational process and what resulted from these elements was knowledge (head), reaction to knowledge (heart), and action (will). Therefore

. . . education is a function of the soul through the mind and the senses; for it takes a living soul to notice, and a rational soul to understand and react upon, or respond to, the things noticed; and it takes a regenerated soul to understand, and to react properly upon, the revelations of God.¹¹

For Stellsborn, "all education is primarily a matter of the soul" ¹²

The senses, the mind and intellect, and other physical properties of man are but the tools and agents of the rational human soul, not entities that could possibly function for themselves.

In a certain sense, then, all education, formal as well as informal, organized as well as unorganized, schooling as well as educational growth in life, is a soul service, so long as it is really a service to the soul and not a hindrance or detriment.¹³

As one moves from Stellsborn's general definition of education to his definition of Christian education, one is

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²August C. Stellsborn, "Soul Service in School," unpublished essay delivered to the St. Louis Mixed Conference, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, April 17, 1936, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellsborn papers, p. 1.

¹³Ibid.

confronted by a broad concept which saw Christian education as "God's influence upon man by means of the Word and the Sacraments, for the purpose of making and keeping him a true child of God, and giving him eternal life."¹⁴ Under this large umbrella, Stellsborn saw Christian education in both a wide and a strict sense. Christian education in the wider sense was "simply the teaching and preaching of the Word of God, with its results."¹⁵ Christian education in the stricter sense was "possible only in the case of a Christian," and had "to do only with the preservation, strengthening, and perfecting of those already in the faith"¹⁶ In this strict definition of Christian education Stellsborn reflected the orthodox Missouri Synod teaching regarding sanctification (The continued preservation and constant strengthening of the saving faith). In practice, Stellsborn believed that "Christian education in the strict sense does not differ from Christian education in its wider sense."¹⁷

Stellsborn incorporated much of the foregoing into his definition of Lutheran education, but was careful to point out that

. . . a Lutheran education does not consist in

¹⁴Stellsborn, "Christian Education," p. 4.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁷Ibid.

acquainting a person--child or adult--to a greater or lesser degree with the Lutheran doctrine, with the Word of God, with the Catechism, with Bible stories, so that such a person acquires a greater or lesser amount of Biblical, or Lutheran, knowledge and understanding (in mind) and can answer a larger or smaller number of questions concerning it¹⁸

Rather, Stellhorn broadly defined a Lutheran education as "a process of development whereby the sinner is brought to, and continued in, true daily repentance"¹⁹ and "that corresponds in all essential points to our Lutheran doctrinal stand as applied to this life and the life to come."²⁰ As Stellhorn further elaborated:

A Lutheran education properly applies the principles and facts concerning education as such. This means that we avoid and discard the mistaken ideas with their evil results and arrange our activities and practises according to the principles that actually obtain:--thus, we look upon our Lutheran education as something that is going on all the time, both in and out of school and church, with never a point of graduation or finishing in this world; that this process, especially during school age, or the formative period, must not be hindered, or countered, or weakened, by powerful un-Lutheran agencies; that we do not emphasize knowledge-getting and mind discipline at the expense of training, thereby defeating our own efforts; that we keep our religion and our other activities always combined, in school as well as in life; that we always bear in mind that education principally has to do with the soul; that we avoid false education as much as false prophets, as it is just as great a force for evil as they, if not greater, being strongly spiritual and religious; that we so arrange the education of our children that the two great aims in all education be achieved, namely, the evil influences be kept away and the influences for good made continuous,

¹⁸Stellhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 21.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., p. 22.

uniformly striving toward the highest goal.²¹

In the foregoing quotation, one not only receives a further amplification of the meaning of Lutheran education as Stellanor viewed it, but one also begins to sense some concomitant purposes. Such words as "training," "false education," and "evil influences" indicate his educational perspective. The purposes of Lutheran education in Stellanor's scheme of things will be treated shortly, but a discussion of his ideas on the agencies of Lutheran education need prior attention.

As can be deduced, Stellanor believed that education was a life-long process. In fact, he once confessed that, of the educational agencies, "The greatest and most effective school is life itself. It is here that experience teaches, and 'experience is the best teacher.'"²² But in his Missouri Synod Lutheran theological orthodoxy, Stellanor believed that "For the purpose of guiding, directing, and hastening the educational process, God has instituted the home and the Church"²³ The two were, for him, the formal Lutheran educational agencies. Life was an unorganized, informal agency of education.

Martin Luther believed that the basic institution for the teaching and training of children is the home or

²¹Ibid., p. 23.

²²Ibid., p. 19.

²³Ibid., p. 25.

family, that parents, especially fathers, have the first responsibility for the education of their children and that the teaching and training of children according to God's will is the highest responsibility of parenthood. Throughout his written promotional efforts, Stelhorn (like Luther) stressed again and again that "the home is far more powerful than any formal educational agency."²⁴ He believed that the home was an agency instituted by God. It operated by virtue of the divine institution of marriage, by the authority which God gave parents over their children and household, by God's commands to children to honor and obey their parents, and, by God's commands to parents to teach and train their children.²⁵ In Stelhorn's words:

The child is born into the home and given by God into the care of his father and mother. They are his natural and principal educators,--not only during the pre-school age, not only during the school age, but also after school age and, in a measure, throughout life. The child belongs to God; but on earth he is made subject (by the Fourth Commandment) to father and mother, who are God's representatives. The purpose is parental control and leadership in the bringing up of the child, who is to live a godly life here in time and hereafter in eternity--destined to return to God, who has created and redeemed him. The duty confronting parents upon the arrival of a child is to care for his body and soul. The care of the body includes such self-evident matters as feeding, clothing, nursing, and sheltering the child. The care of the soul means his entire education and training, not only the formal

²⁴August C. Stelhorn, "Reaching Our Goal in School Enrollment," Lutheran Education 88 (October 1952): 68.

²⁵Stelhorn, "Christian Education," p. 7.

teaching of God's Word.²⁶

Once again, both the physical body and the spiritual essence (soul) are to receive parental care, but the emphasis on the soul is paramount.

Stellhorn believed that parents could find their roles delineated in the Bible, for it was "there [that] God . . . made plain the duties of Christian parents."²⁷ Those duties were to be found in the inspired words of the Apostle Paul when he wrote, "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).²⁸ Stellhorn interpreted this passage literally. For him it meant that "parents . . . must bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."²⁹ In fact, as will be seen later, "nurture" and "admonition" appear to form the heart and core of all Christian education, be it parental or otherwise. Equally significant for Stellhorn were the words "Ye fathers." While he believed that "Father and mother are both to train,"³⁰ Stellhorn viewed the Lord as fixing

²⁶Stellhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, pp. 26-27.

²⁷August C. Stellhorn, "Ye Fathers," Lutheran School Journal 57 (March 1922): 67.

²⁸August C. Stellhorn, "The Important Office of Fathers," The Lutheran Witness 51 (June 1932): 207.

²⁹Stellhorn, "Ye Fathers," p. 66.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 69.

. . . responsibility for the children on the fathers. No mother, no relative, no church, no pastor, no teacher, can ever take the father's responsibility away from him. It is the father first, last, and all the time of whom the Lord will ask the children entrusted to his care as long as he or the children live. Fatherhood therefore is a sacred office, equipped with the full power of the Fourth Commandment, which makes the children subject to the parents' will. A father's first and main business is . . . to lead his children to God by a careful and continued process of Christian training.³¹

Stellhorn's emphasis on the authority of the father reflected the orthodox Missouri Synod teaching, set forth in Scripture, that in the husband and wife relationship, woman was created for the man, to be a helpmate for him, and that he was to rule over her. Consequently, the husband is the head of the wife. While Stellhorn was certainly orthodox in this regard, he was not unrealistic as to whom performed most of the home training function. This is indicated when he wrote that "As otherwise, so also in the training of children the mother is the [helpmate] of her husband, though usually she does most of the training."³² In fact, said Stellhorn, "to the credit of mothers let it be said that they usually carry out the greater part of the actual training, being almost constantly associated with their children from the cradle on."³³ "But," he retorted, "the man, not the woman, . . . the father is responsible. He has

³¹Stellhorn, "The Important Office of Fathers," p. 207.

³²Ibid.

³³Stellhorn, "Ye Fathers," p. 69.

the final sayso, provided he is in agreement with Scripture."³⁴

Stellhorn's exhortation of fathers and their role in the Christian Lutheran education of their children did not end here. He was seriously concerned with

. . . the belief that parents are to supply but the wants of the body and perhaps hire music teachers, but that it is the business of the schools and churches to look after the rest. This false assumption is evidently at the botton of all school church and state paternalism. A very natural sequence: If the father does not father his children . . . , some one else feels called upon to do so. Paternalism is fathering. We need more paternalism in the homes, and we shall have less in other places. Wherever parents have shifted their responsibility in education to other agencies, it is high time that it shifted back; for not only is this God's will and intention, but everything will go wrong, too, if it is not done. This should be clear that the God-ordained home is expected to care not only for the body, but also fully for the soul, for the whole education of the child. On Judgment Day, God will demand the children of their parents, and they will have to give account.³⁵

Stellhorn seemed to believe that, while the father held final responsibility and authority on earth, his helpmate might bear an equal amount of the brunt for failure in child training when God perused their parental ledger in the hereafter.

In Stellhorn's view, the second most important formal Christian educational agency was the Church. Like the home, the Church was also a God-ordained education

³⁴Stellhorn, "The Important Office of Fathers," p. 207.

³⁵Stellhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 27.

agency with its roots also found in Holy Writ. Specifically, it was in Christ's great final command to His disciples to "Go . . . and teach all nations" (Matt. 28:19-20) that Stellohorn found the very purpose of the Church (e.g., to save souls), but also an injunction from God for the Church as an educational agency. He wrote that the word "teach" in Christ's final command meant

. . . that we must keep the converts with the Church and educate them. We might term it the home work of the church or the work of the Church's household. What were the things which Jesus commanded His disciples and which are to be observed by all Christians? This is evident from another word of Christ: "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth; and the truth shall make you free." What are these words? Not only what Jesus told His disciples while sojourning in the flesh, but the whole Word of God, from the first verse of the Bible to the last.³⁶

But it was the word "teach" that, for Stellohorn, made Christian Lutheran schools so important and that caused him to conclude that "An essential part of the Church's work is to take care of its children, not only by baptism, but also by instructing and training them in the Word of God."³⁷

While the Christian Lutheran school was important to Stellohorn, he believed that the educational work of the Church was exemplified by a number of its formal and informal educational agencies. He enumerated them as follows:

1. The formal agencies.

³⁶Ibid., p. 28.

³⁷Ibid.

- a. Public worship.
 - b. The parochial school.
 - c. Confirmation instruction.
 - d. "Christenlehre." [a special, supplemental Christian doctrine class for children usually held after a Sunday service]
 - e. Instruction for adult confirmation.
 - f. The Sunday school with Bible classes.
 - g. Separate Bible classes.
 - h. The Saturday school.
 - i. The summer school.
 - j. Week-day religious instruction.
 - k. Religious instruction by mail.
 - l. Lutheran high schools.
 - m. Synodical colleges and seminaries.
 - n. Valparaiso University.
2. The informal agencies.
- a. Conferences and Synodical conventions.
 - b. The voters' meeting.
 - c. Organizations of members, men and women.
 - d. Young people's societies.
 - e. Parent groups³⁸

As is apparent, Stellsborn regarded the church itself as a formal agency of education but generally was not particularly concerned with its informal educational agencies. Rather, most of his written promotional material focused upon the Church's formal agencies of education. Among those he could classify many (e.g., Sunday school, Saturday school, summer school, week-day classes, confirmation class, Bible class, etc.) as "part-time agencies" that "Though beyond reproach in themselves, and profitable and necessary in their sphere and within their limitations, they form a combination with public education that is subject to criticism."³⁹ These part-time agencies were, for Stellsborn, "make-shift" or "emergency measures"

³⁸Stellsborn, "Christian Education," pp. 8-9.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 9-10.

to be used only where "a Christian full-time school is not possible."⁴⁰ Even at that, "All of them combined would not be the equivalent of a full-time parochial school."⁴¹

For Stellhorn, then, even though "when speaking of the bringing up of . . . children in general," it was "the Christian home" that was the greatest "factor in the Christian training of children" even greater than his beloved Christian school. "The Church has as yet found no better institution than the daily Christian school to carry out its own particular duties toward the children."⁴² While his concept of the full-time parochial school included Christian education at the elementary, secondary, and collegiate levels, because of Stellhorn's position as Secretary of Schools, most of his commentary was directed to the Christian Lutheran elementary school as an educational agency. In his words:

The Lutheran elementary school is a church institution. It has been found to be the most efficient agency by means of which the local congregation may meet its obligation to teach and train children according to the solemn charge⁴³ of Christ to His disciples of all times

Even more emphatically, Stellhorn commented that "The school

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 10.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²August C. Stellhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin IX (September 1, 1929): 1-2.

⁴³August C. Stellhorn, Foreword to General Course of Study for Lutheran Elementary Schools, by William A. Kramer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1943), p. iii.

for Lutheran congregations and Lutheran school children is the Lutheran day school, the Lutheran parochial school, the Lutheran congregational school only."⁴⁴

This emphasis was founded on Stellschorn's belief that a creeping state paternalism was manifesting itself, in part, in the state's entrance into the field of education. He believed that the state was "not ordained of God to be an educator, but a preserver of public peace and order"⁴⁵ Again, it was the home and Church that possessed the divine injunction to educate. While Stellschorn recognized the agency of public education, viewed it as a political necessity for the temporal welfare of people, and urged Missouri Synod Lutherans to always support it as patriotic Christian citizens through payment of their taxes, he would not acknowledge the agency much further because

. . . it is becoming more and more impossible for parents with firm religious convictions to send their children to the tax-supported schools of all citizens, because the state insists on teaching a philosophy there which is a direct denial of the faith of such parents and their children.⁴⁶

The "philosophy" that Stellschorn was most concerned about was the teaching of evolutionary theory because his religious

⁴⁴August C. Stellschorn, "The Status of the Christian Day School in its Relation to the Secular, Non-Religious School and the Sunday School," n.d., Concordia Historical Institute, Stellschorn papers, p. 1.

⁴⁵Stellschorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 26.

⁴⁶August C. Stellschorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 61 (March 1926): 105.

orthodoxy dictated that exposure to this concept would be particularly pervasive to a child's Christian faith. As will be borne out in Chapter V, he also viewed the philosophical emphasis of the pragmatists on relative truth as a concept that could destroy the very foundation of Christianity. Regardless, Stellhorn believed that

. . . to substitute the God-given agencies and to transfer their duties to the public schools will only tend to exterminate the little effort yet exerted by some parents and churches, quiet the troubled conscience of others, and make for a still more complete state paternalism. Let us do everything to stem the tide, especially among our own people, and instead of shifting the God-given responsibilities to weaker agencies, let us remind and admonish parents and churches to do their duty.⁴⁷

The above quotation reflected a fear of the public school as an education agency--a fear perhaps of competition with Stellhorn's revered parochial school. Stellhorn feared that the accessibility of public schools would deter parents and congregations from opening parish schools. Throughout his career Stellhorn had always campaigned actively for parish schools.

Turning again to the Lutheran elementary school, Stellhorn found that the Biblical injunction to parents regarding nurturing and admonishing their children applied to this Christian educational agency as well. In his words: "The best, really adequate, effective, necessary, and indispensable means and way, to bring children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord . . . is the

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 110.

establishment and maintenance of the Christian Day School."⁴⁸ More will be said regarding the aspects of nurture and admonition in Stelhorn's view of Christian education when his idea of contributory purposes of a Christian Lutheran education are discussed. However, attention will now be directed to the relationship between the agencies of a Lutheran education.

Stelhorn argued that the Lord "provided two agencies for the education of the child--the home and the Church. The Church, in order to carry out its duties most economically and efficiently, has established . . . parochial schools . . . which are maintained by it and conducted under its supervision."⁴⁹ This enabled him to state that "A Lutheran home, a Lutheran school, and a Lutheran church are the outstanding agencies in a Lutheran education."⁵⁰ What Stelhorn apparently envisioned was the educative force of a school-home-church synthesis. While Stelhorn believed that the home was not "an institution of the congregation, as it is not established and maintained by the congregation,"⁵¹ he did believe that a "united and uniform practise is essential" in Christian

⁴⁸Stelhorn, "The Status of the Christian Day School," p. 1.

⁴⁹Stelhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 28.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Stelhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin IX (September 1, 1929): 2.

training.⁵² More specifically, he wrote that "the Christian education of the child is a unitary process, spiritual in all its aspects, and a joint responsibility of home and Church."⁵³ Because Christian training is a joint responsibility

. . . the maintenance of the parochial school is dependent on the status of understanding of the church as a whole, so it is also dependent on the status of the parent's understanding of Christian home-training. Though a purely ecclesiastical institution, the parochial school is based as well on the office of parents as it is based on the office of the ministry.⁵⁴

Stellhorn recognized that "It takes more than a school to train children, no matter how good the instruction and training. It takes a Christian home and church which fully cooperates with the school."⁵⁵ Perhaps idealistically, then, he could proudly proclaim in the twilight of his career that the Missouri Synod was fortunate in that it had "no separation of church and school, no gulf to bridge between . . . parents and the congregation."⁵⁶

While his envisioned synthesis of Lutheran educational agencies was neither definitive nor systematic,

⁵²August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 64 (May 1929): 193.

⁵³August C. Stellhorn, "Why Parochial Schools?" Advance 1 (October 1954): 3.

⁵⁴Stellhorn, "Ye Fathers," p. 66.

⁵⁵August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 61 (June 1926): 224-225.

⁵⁶August C. Stellhorn, "An Arm of the Church," Advance 4 (November 1957): 37.

it was apparent. It also appeared that, when meting out blame or credit for the results of Christian training, it was the agency of the home that was principally responsible. For example, Stellhorn wrote:

. . . let us hold father and mother responsible for everything pertaining to their children's welfare, regardless of what the Church may or may not be doing for them; for they stand in the front rank of those who influence children and can do more good than anybody else. Without their positive will to do the best, their serious efforts, their lasting influence, the Church's influence is, to say the least, doubtful. Let us hold them responsible for their children's church-membership, Christianity, salvation, unless it is obvious that the children are going wrong in spite of them.⁵⁷

While he provides an "out" for parental guilt, Stellhorn more than counterbalanced it when he assessed the Lutheran school in the light of failure or success in its endeavors. Stellhorn concluded that

. . . our Christian school system . . . can neither be given the chief credit for the favorable conditions nor the chief blame for the unfavorable conditions There is a great "power behind the throne"--the people themselves, or let us say the homes, for that is where the people are and demonstrate what is in them--which, if it functions in the right direction, produces incalculable good and brings our Christian educational system into its own, but which if it fails, will at once weaken the entire body, produce numerous ills, and decidedly hamper or counteract and defeat the efforts of the educational system.⁵⁸

Indeed, for Stellhorn, the Lutheran parochial school could

⁵⁷August C. Stellhorn, "Our Losses Among the Confirmed," The Lutheran Witness 47 (May 1928): 154.

⁵⁸August C. Stellhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin II (February 1, 1933): 5-6.

never substitute for the Christian home.⁵⁹

The final focus of this chapter will be to explore what Stellsborn perceived to be the purposes of a Lutheran education. Within Stellsborn's school-home-church educative synthesis there appear to be the following all-encompassing strands that related to the purposes of a Lutheran education: (1) The pleasure and glory of God, and (2) Restoring man to his original state (e.g., salvation).

The first of Stellsborn's general purposes for Lutheran education was the pleasure and glory of God. In his scheme of things, this purpose was seen as "the one ultimate objective of Christian education" to which all others contributed.⁶⁰ Stellsborn reasoned that "It is the will of God that the entire education and training of His children be Christian, because they have only one purpose on earth, and that is to please and glorify God."⁶¹ Actually, for Stellsborn and all other confessing Missouri Synod Lutherans, it was not just the child, but all mankind that existed to the pleasure and glory of God. Focusing specifically on the Lutheran elementary school, Stellsborn commented that

⁵⁹August C. Stellsborn, "Synodical Growth and the Christian Home," The Lutheran Witness 41 (May 1922): 164.

⁶⁰August C. Stellsborn, "The General Objectives of Christian Education," November 11, 1948, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellsborn papers, p. 1.

⁶¹August C. Stellsborn, "The Word 'Discipline' in the Fourth Petition," Lutheran Education 90 (December 1954): 174.

It equips the children with all the knowledge, ability, and skill that they will need to fulfill the purpose of man on earth, which is . . . specifically, to glorify God in all things, no matter how non-religious in themselves, such as "whether . . . ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do"⁶²

While the pleasure and glory of God was the "one ultimate" purpose of Lutheran education, it was not the one to which he devoted the majority of his literary efforts.

Stellhorn's attention was almost exclusively concentrated upon his second general purpose of Lutheran education, the restoration of man to his original state, and to collateral purposes that contributed to its achievement. "If the fall of man made education necessary," wrote Stellhorn, "then what is the purpose of education? Is it not, very briefly stated, to overcome the results of the Fall?"⁶³ Implicit in this restoration purpose was the idea of salvation. Stellhorn believed that "the entire Christian education of the believer . . . is already embraced under 'The Salvation of Man.'"⁶⁴ The "first and main aim" of Christian education, according to Stellhorn, was "and always must be, to save men's souls"⁶⁵ In other words,

⁶²August C. Stellhorn, Planning a Lutheran School (St. Louis: Board for Parish Education, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, n.d.), p. 22.

⁶³Stellhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 29.

⁶⁴Stellhorn, "The General Objectives of Christian Education," p. 2.

⁶⁵August C. Stellhorn, "The Question of School Tuition," Parish Education 30 (November 1952): 137.

Christian education was "to secure for all our children that training in home and school which will lead them safely to a God-fearing life here in time and to heaven in eternity."⁶⁶ Stellhorn believed that "The child must be educated for eternity, or the most important element in education has been omitted."⁶⁷ This was true because

Education enthrones either God or the human intellect. According to God's Word, God must be enthroned in our thinking and in our lives In Christian education the right conception of God and His Word and work is taught. That is why Christian education is the only complete education.⁶⁸

So, then, the chief concern of the restoration thrust of Lutheran education was to be

. . . the individual child's eternal salvation. To this end, the faith of the baptized child is daily nourished, strengthened, and purified by leading him deeper and deeper into the truth of Holy Scripture, and into an ever closer communion with God in true fear, love, and trust. The object is to equip him spiritually in the best possible way, so that he may remain loyal to his God and Savior throughout life, and be fully prepared any time to enter his heavenly home.⁶⁹

While the home was always to reign supreme in Stellhorn's school-home-church synthesis, he believed that

⁶⁶August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 59 (January 1924): 22.

⁶⁷August C. Stellhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin X (October 1, 1940): 2.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹August C. Stellhorn, "Why the Lutherans Maintain Elementary Schools," script for the Question Hour of KFJO Radio, St. Louis, n.d., Concordia Historical Institute, Stellhorn papers, p. 1.

"as a formal teaching agency it has its limitations"⁷⁰ as did the part-time agencies of the church. He never specifically enumerated what exactly these limitations of the home were, but one can safely assume that they were principally centered upon pedagogical deficiencies and, as he perceived it, a parental disavowal of their God-ordained commission to educate. Consequently, within the restoration (salvation) purpose of Christian education it was the Christian school that

. . . alone truly understands the human being, his origin, purpose, and destiny . . . [and] its chief purpose, is to nurture the faith-life of the Christian child, [but] it must not slight the natural and human side of the same child; in fact, the Christian child's whole nature is to be brought into conformity with and under the dominance of his new spiritual life⁷¹

Therefore, it was in the Lutheran school that the child would be offered just what he needed. In Stellhorn's perspective, this was true because

There he will not fall short in common knowledge, he will not have to stand back of pupils attending other schools, but in addition he will receive an education that is throughout Christian, throughout Lutheran, no matter whether it is the Word of God or Geography or Science, that is taught. Here, in this plastic stage of youthful development, he is formed into a young man with definite convictions, with a firm will to do right before God and man, and a sincere love and fear of God. Here he is day by day, in a gradual and natural way, brought up in the ways of the Lord, which develops in him spriritual strength and judgment, so that, humanly speaking, he should be prepared to pass through this sinful world unscathed and unharmed, and, after a rich and fruitful life here on earth, reach his heavenly

⁷⁰Stellhorn, "Christian Education," p. 9.

⁷¹Stellhorn, "Soul Service in School," p. 2.

abode in safety. That is one great advantage of the Lutheran school.⁷²

The restoration-salvation purpose is very much evident in the above perspective. It is also interesting to note that Stellsborn saw the Lutheran school as an "advantage" not just for the child, but also for the other agencies (e.g., home and church) of his educative synthesis. The Lutheran school could facilitate the restorative purpose because its influence

. . . is bound to carry over into the homes. Let parents discuss spiritual things with their children, as they have the daily duty to do, and the children will understand them. Home training at once becomes doubly effective. Soon after graduation, the young folks become members of the congregation, and again the influence is felt. Here are boys and girls who will understand the pastor's sermons; they find their school education reflected in them and more deeply impressed. Here are boys and girls who feel the need of attending the services, of assisting the congregation in every way, of supporting missionary endeavors, of giving other children a Christian education, of preparing for the ministry and the Lutheran teacher's calling, and of supporting the common endeavors of many congregations combined in Synod.⁷³

This facilitation of the educative force of the school-home-church synthesis by Lutheran schools to achieve the restoration-salvation purpose was important to Stellsborn, but it was not primary. He continually concentrated and re-emphasized the role of the Lutheran school in the restoration of man to his original state.

⁷²August C. Stellsborn, "Address at the Southern District Convention," Mobile, Alabama, February, 1927, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellsborn papers, p. 2.

⁷³Ibid., pp. 2-3.

This is again reflected in the following glowing assessment:

What a blessing, therefore, are those schools and colleges which have the true light and lead their pupils surely and safely toward it; which have and dispense the absolute truth concerning things temporal and eternal; which . . . bring their pupils and students just a little nearer to the true goal; for they will be a little more aware of the darkness that surrounds them [sin] and have a little clearer view of the path "which leadeth unto life," be blessed with a stronger heart and a more settled Christian character, with a better knowledge of their own unworthiness and the richness of the grace of God; they will have a firmer belief and more worthy desires, show greater efficiency in the service of God and man, and be more "thoroughly furnished unto all good works."⁷⁴

Even when Stellhorn removed himself from his promotional role as Secretary of Schools, the same purposeful theme of restoration-salvation is reiterated. From his perspective as a parent, Stellhorn wrote:

In the school, [the] Word [of God] is daily unfolded more and more to my children. They grow spiritually. They grow more and more intimate with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. On the other hand, they learn to realize more and more their own unworthiness in the sight of God, their extreme depravity and wickedness by nature, the true nature of the unbelieving world, and the wiles of Satan himself. As a consequence, they grow in faith, in the fear of God, in true love of their neighbor, in power against the spiritual foes, in Biblical understanding and judgment, and in their desire to renounce all that is evil and to serve their gracious God in all conscientiousness and joy in time and eternity.⁷⁵

One can easily detect Stellhorn's Missouri Synod orthodoxy, the relationship of Law and Gospel within that orthodoxy, and the restorative purpose of Lutheran schooling in his

⁷⁴August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 61 (October 1926): 382-383.

⁷⁵August C. Stellhorn, "Our Lutheran Schools," The Walther League Messenger 43 (August-September 1934): 40.

personal testimony as a father.

Probably the simplest comment supplied by Stellhorn regarding the restorative purpose of a Christian education was provided during the twilight of his career as Secretary of Schools for The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. In 1956, with the battle for survival of his beloved agency apparently won, Stellhorn wrote:

The Lutheran parochial school is a house of God, a special pasture for the lambs of the Good Shepherd, who "takes them up in His arms and carries them in His bosom," close to His heart; it is the workshop of the Holy Spirit by means of the Word, the powerful means for the enlightenment, establishment, and sanctification of His children.⁷⁶

Indeed, it was in this "workshop of the Holy Spirit" that the child was to overcome "the results of the Fall in God's way, i.e., according to the pure Word of God, and is successful. That is the purpose of a Lutheran education."⁷⁷

It was posited earlier in this chapter that Stellhorn believed that Lutheran education had collateral purposes. These purposes contributed to achieving the restorative purpose of Christian education and, in turn, toward the "ultimate" objective--the pleasure and glory of God. Four concomitant purposes can be gleaned from his writing: (1) the contributory purpose of Christian training, (2) indoctrination, (3) providing a general education, and

⁷⁶August C. Stellhorn, "School System in Motion," The Lutheran Witness 75 (September 1956): 353.

⁷⁷Stellhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education, p. 30.

(4) mission outreach. This chapter continues with a treatment of each together with a consideration of their purposeful relationship to the restoration of man to his original state.

Of the four collateral purposes, perhaps the one most emphasized by Stellhorn was the goal of Christian training. Here Stellhorn made little distinction as to which agency in his educative synthesis was to provide this training. Both home and church (school) were to provide it.⁷⁸ For Stellhorn, "If a child is trained diligently in the fear of the Lord, he will also live in the fear of the Lord . . ."⁷⁹ and, consequently, the restorative purpose could be achieved.

Stellhorn viewed Christian training as a Biblical injunction and testified that training was necessary because when the child "comes into the world he knows nothing, and he does not know how to conduct himself."⁸⁰ This condition was premised on the fact that

Since the fall of Adam and Eve, every human being is born in ignorance and depravity. If left alone, he develops into a savage and barbarian. He is ignorant in

⁷⁸August C. Stellhorn, "Financing Our Elementary Schools," Advance 2 (October 1955): 8.

⁷⁹Stellhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin X (October 1, 1940) 2.

⁸⁰August C. Stellhorn, "What Does It Mean to Train Children?" unpublished (and unused) essay written for St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, July 5, 1942, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellhorn papers, p. 1.

all the common things of life, and, therefore, is constantly in trouble and danger. In the matter of right and wrong, he does not follow a certain path, but strikes out in all directions. He can not even know or find the narrow way "that leadeth unto life," much less walk that way.⁸¹

Obviously, Stellohorn's orthodox religious beliefs told him that had man not fallen from his original state of perfection, this condition of ignorance and depravity would not have existed.

For Stellohorn, the first of two Biblical injunctions that spoke to the concomitant purpose of Christian training could be found in Proverbs 22:6 where Solomon's inspired wisdom commanded: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." After inquiring into the meaning of the original Hebrew word for "train up," Stellohorn concluded that it meant "to narrow down."⁸² While confessing that it was usually "true that education broadens our knowledge, outlook, interests, and abilities," there was that dimension of education that could not be ignored which said, "the more we know and the better we are trained, the more we are narrowed down to a certain correct way of living or of doing things."⁸³ For Stellohorn, there were many ways that a child "could or might go, but there is only one way which he should go. In all ordinary things of life, this is the way that Christian parents and

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Ibid., pp. 1-2.

teachers map out for the child as the best and most profitable."⁸⁴ "In short," said Stelhorn, Christian

. . . parents and teachers have a certain definite way in mind that the child should go. In all spiritual matters, God has prescribed that way. It is "the narrow way that leadeth unto life," a way that few people find and still fewer follow. In Christian training, therefore, the Christian child is to be narrowed down to this narrow way of life.

Training, then, means to narrow a person down to the one correct way he should go.⁸⁵

The "one correct way," of course, was God's way as outlined in Holy Scripture and that would result in the restoration of man to his original state of perfection in eternity. This contributory purpose of Christian training was to be striven after throughout life. Stelhorn wrote:

. . . we elders must be sure about the way in which the child should be brought up, in order that we may not seal the doom of the child from the very beginning. The right way is the narrow way, the truly Christian way, which leadeth to life. To this way the child is to be narrowed down, according to the true meaning of training. This is a continued process, which must begin early, with the child, but it must lead up to a goal of maturity Provided the child is really brought up in the way God wants him to go in life, he will not depart from it when he is old; in other words, our Christian training will be a success.⁸⁶

This Christian training was important to Stelhorn for three reasons:

1. If left to himself, or if the training is too meager, man will walk the broad way "which leadeth to

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ August C. Stelhorn, "A Few Outstanding Facts About Christian Education," September 28, 1936, Concordia Historical Institute, Stelhorn papers, p. 1.

destruction," and even in all ordinary things of life he will be mostly in misery and trouble. 2. Even the Christian is always [inclined] to depart from the narrow way and to follow the ways of the world. 3. If a child is carefully trained in the way he should go, we have the promise of God for it that, "when he is old, he will not depart from it."⁸⁷

Also implicit in this collateral purpose of Christian training for Stellhorn was conceiving of it, in part, "as a process of . . . habit formation" in children.⁸⁸ This, in turn, would "put the child on his own feet as early as possible, so that he will discipline and control himself."⁸⁹

While most of Stellhorn's rhetoric regarding Christian training remained within the realm of his school-home-church educative synthesis, he did single out the agency of the Lutheran school in an attempt to clarify the relationship of the teaching of facts (knowledge) and his conception of training. In a book for beginning teachers, Stellhorn wrote that

. . . teaching of facts is only a means toward a loftier end. The end is not knowledge or the ability to retain it or to reproduce it in an examination [T]he end is the training of the child. And to train the child means to change him into something better--him, not merely his knowledge. As to the actual meaning of the word "train," it is a matter of narrowing him down to the one expert and right way that he should go in all things. By nature he is ignorant and therefore blind to right and wrong, constantly tending to go the wrong way. He is unskillful and therefore unable to help himself;

⁸⁷Stellhorn, "What Does It Mean to Train Children?" p. 3.

⁸⁸August C. Stellhorn, "The Habits of Children," The Lutheran Witness 62 (April 1943): 126.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 127.

even the regenerate child is, by nature, constantly inclined toward the ways of error, sin, and destruction. Hence the need for narrowing him down to the way he should go.

Instruction in a Lutheran school takes in the whole range of children's needs, temporal as well as eternal. Its end is not to give the child knowledge, but by means of knowledge, to set his heart right and to direct and establish his will, so that he will think, speak, act in a manner prescribed by God in His Word, and, though unable to reach perfection in this evil world, strive for such perfection from day to day.⁹⁰

Thus, as a Lutheran school performed its instructional function of imparting knowledge it was contributing toward the Christian training of the child and, consequently, facilitating the restoration of man to his original state.

Stellhorn believed that Christian training in general consisted of two elements--nurture and admonition. These elements could be found in the Lord's Scriptural injunction to fathers which commanded them not to provoke their "children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). In simple terms, Stellhorn wrote that

Nurture means teaching or instruction. Admonition means the correction of the learner if he does not follow the instruction. Instruction alone is not enough; correction alone is not enough; both must go together in order to train a person. In the instruction he is taught what to believe and how to live; in the correction he is held to the teaching that he has been given. The correction includes discipline and even punishment.⁹¹

⁹⁰August C. Stellhorn, The Beginning Teacher (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1946), p. 25.

⁹¹Stellhorn, "What Does It Mean to Train Children?" pp. 3-4.

Thus, training consisted "of two essential elements: instruction and correction (application of the instruction)" but one would be "incomplete without the other"⁹² and no training was to be considered Christian training unless it consisted of both.⁹³

More specifically, for Stellhorn, "Nurture of the Lord" is that which induces growth in spiritual knowledge and understanding"⁹⁴ It was "the instruction in the Word of the Lord, the teaching of Law and Gospel; it is Christian instruction, instruction from the Bible, Bible History, Catechism, and anything that belongs to it."⁹⁵ The nurturing of the child had no age limit according to Stellhorn. It was to go on "until they have become rich enough in understanding, no matter how long it takes. Bring them up; that is a long, continued process of development, which extends over a long time."⁹⁶

The other essential element in Christian training--admonition--was also more specifically outlined by Stellhorn. He viewed it as "correcting the child whenever he does something contrary to what he has learned from the

⁹²August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 60 (October 1924): 390.

⁹³Stellhorn, "Ye Fathers," p. 72.

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Stellhorn, "The Important Office of Fathers," p. 207.

⁹⁶Ibid.

Word of God It is the application of what has been taught. Every application is again teaching."⁹⁷ Even more succinctly, Stellhorn pointed out that

The essence of admonition is correction, which ranges from its mildest form of advice or reproof to its severest form of applying the rod. When the one to be trained digresses from the course prescribed to him in the instruction, he must be admonished, corrected, punished. Much of the admonition is already given in the instructions, as the material that is taught is often an admonition in itself. But taken as a separate part of training, it consists in carefully guarding the conduct of the person to be trained and consistently applying what is given him in the instruction, so that he learns to walk the path of righteousness and to live what he believes and knows.⁹⁸

Stellhorn sensed that Christian training might be a total failure if the Lutheran educational agencies depended on instruction alone.⁹⁹ To that end, he warned that "Instruction alone is not training. Only when the admonition follows up or accompanies the instruction, can we speak of training."¹⁰⁰

While it would appear that the Biblical injunction to fathers would make nurture and admonition the sole responsibility of the home according to Stellhorn's synthesis of educative agencies, such was not the case. In discussing admonition as a follow-up to instruction,

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸August C. Stellhorn, "'Ye Fathers. (concluded)," p. 151.

⁹⁹Stellhorn, "The Important Office of Fathers," p. 207.

¹⁰⁰Stellhorn, "'Ye Fathers. (concluded)," p. 151.

Stellhorn made the application to Lutheran schools and observed a great advantage in them because they kept "the children beyond the religious period. It is not only more instruction that we seek in the schools, but the opportunity to carry on training."¹⁰¹ Although Stellhorn valued the home as an educational agency, he believed that for nurture (instruction) and admonition (correction), the Lutheran school excelled "the home, as far as the instruction, the teaching of the Word of God, is concerned."¹⁰² Stellhorn reasoned that instruction in the Lutheran school

. . . is conducted by a called minister [teacher] of Christ, and done regularly. Bible History and Catechism are taught and Bible-passages, hymns, and the Chief Parts of the Catechism are learned and recited according to a fixed plan, a definite course, which the teachers cover within specified time limits, so that children are sure to advance gradually and easily and to acquire a maximum of Scriptural knowledge. Besides being regular and systematic, the instruction is carried on according to the best pedagogical principles. Furthermore, the teacher is aided by his daily experience in this particular work, and if he is a faithful man, he grows keener and more skillful from month to month and year to year. Many a teacher is a veritable expert and master in the art of teaching. For many other reasons, not necessary to enumerate, the home finds itself outclassed by the school, as far as the instruction is concerned.¹⁰³

While not using the same glowing rhetoric regarding the Lutheran school's responsibility in the other essential of Christian training (e.g., admonition or correction), Stellhorn did believe that the Lutheran school could just as

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 152.

¹⁰³Ibid., pp. 152-153.

well lay claim to being a training institution through its work in admonition. This was true because, as was pointed out earlier,

. . . much . . . instruction is admonition in itself, and the Christian teacher keeps the pupils long enough under his supervision to enable him to watch their conduct and to make corrections. Day after day he is with them. He learns to know them quite well, and the children learn to know him still better. Thus the school is much like a Christian family, and the teacher a spiritual father. The fact that the parochial school retains its pupils beyond the religious lesson, having them under control and supervision the whole school-day and during the whole school-age of a child, teaching secular knowledge both from a Christian standpoint and under the influence and dominance of religion, training people always to keep all secular activities and knowledge in proper correlation with, and under the dominance of, religion in their whole later career, and preventing the influence of irreligious teachers and teachers of false religions--all this elevates the Christian day-school above other means of the Church to train the young, and makes of it a real training-school.¹⁰⁴

So, besides being superior to the home in nurture, the Lutheran school far surpassed any other Church educational agency (e.g., Sunday school, Saturday school, etc.) because it performed at a full-time level, not part-time.

Then, too, children that received no Christian nurture and admonition at home could find it in a Lutheran school. As Stellanhorn pointed out,

While children, lacking the training of a Christian home, usually take the admonition of their Christian teachers lightly, are sometimes not susceptible to the Word of God, and more often led astray by the ungodly example of their parents after temporarily bowing to the influence of the school, they, nevertheless, are trained properly by the school and put on the right path to eternal salvation; and many, most assuredly, are saved

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 153.

in spite of their parents through the school.¹⁰⁵

One again senses the restoration-salvation purpose of Lutheran education in the above quotation as well as a slight reflection of a mission emphasis in the purpose of a Lutheran school. The latter will be treated shortly.

Stellhorn recognized how much easier the training purpose could be achieved if there existed a commonality within the school-home-church educative synthesis. As a former teacher, he could appreciate the fact "that children who are under the discipline and training of pious fathers and mothers at home manifest a wonderful and peculiar appreciation of the admonitions and directions received in school" ¹⁰⁶ Certainly, to Stellhorn, this must have been the ideal in Christian training.

"The parochial school," for Stellhorn, was "indeed an institution of training, taking care of both essentials, nurture and admonition of the Lord."¹⁰⁷ Yet, in explaining the responsibilities of the principals (home and school) in his educative synthesis, Stellhorn believed that it was the home that was in a better position to achieve the concomitant purpose of Christian training in Lutheran education because of its natural intimacy with the child, a longer period of influence, and its God-ordained designation

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 153-154.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 154.

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

and power. While God commanded the Church to perform a certain task (e.g., the preaching and teaching of His Word), the Lutheran parochial school, as an agency of the Church, did not possess this divine injunction regarding the purpose of Christian training.¹⁰⁸ As was indicated in Chapter II, this was to be left to the discretion of the Church, provided the agencies it created were consistent with Scripture. For all these reasons, Stellsborn could emphatically state and maintain that "we have no possible doubt that, of the two, home and school, the home is by far the greater factor in bringing children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."¹⁰⁹

While Christian training and its essential elements of nurture and admonition appeared in Stellsborn's scheme of things to be the pivotal contributory purpose in achieving his larger purpose of Lutheran education, namely, to restore man to his original state, it was by no means the only one. Because Stellsborn implicitly believed that training did "not mean to spread in all directions, least of all in opposite directions," but rather "to prevent such spreading, and to lead into or narrow down to one certain course or direction," a second collateral purpose of Lutheran education was to spare children "the exasperating, conflicting, confusing and countering influences of a

¹⁰⁸Ibid., pp. 154-156.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 156.

divided training" ¹¹⁰ In other words, to achieve the larger purpose of man's restoration, the youth must be "properly trained and indoctrinated." ¹¹¹ This indoctrination was obviously not to be only the function of the school, but was to be a concomitant purpose of each agency in the ultimate restoration of man. Stellhorn's definition of indoctrination did "not mean only the learning of doctrines, but training in the Word of God in home, school, church, and colleges--fear of God, deep reverence for His Word, doctrinal strictness, spiritual discipline." ¹¹²

For Stellhorn, "the most productive period for such indoctrination and training is childhood and

¹¹⁰August C. Stellhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin III (March 1, 1930): 5.

¹¹¹August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 62 (April 1927): 149.

¹¹²August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 63 (September 1928): 356-357. For Stellhorn, indoctrination was justifiably good. This positive perception is diametrically opposed to the majority of today's commentators who believe indoctrination to be necessarily negative. This negative connotation has evolved only comparatively recently.

As will be seen, Stellhorn appears to agree with the majority of contemporary writers who argue indoctrination on either a content criterion or on an intention criterion rather than from the criterion of method. In other words, Stellhorn, as he argued for indoctrination as a concomitant purpose of Lutheran education, did not believe that there was any method which was distinctive of indoctrination. Instead, agreeing with current thought, he appeared to emphasize the handing on of beliefs (e.g., content) together with how teachers deal (e.g., intentions) with those beliefs.

youth"113 This was true because

The child is an entity, a unified being. He must be educated as a whole. If the spirit of the school education is contrary to that of the home and Church training, there will be inevitable conflicts, and it will be difficult for the Christian home and Church to counteract dangerous educational influences.¹¹⁴

These dangerous educational influences were numerous, but most important, their source was the Devil. As Stelhorn wrote: "In many different ways, Satan saturates the education of the young with the ungodly teaching that the Bible is not to be trusted; and once an implicit faith in the teachings of Scripture is shaken, God and salvation are lost."¹¹⁵ Because of the critical nature of the restoration-salvation purpose of Christian education, Stelhorn could remark, "Oh, what a responsibility we have to protect at least our own children!"¹¹⁶ Indoctrination would provide that protection.

In his promotional zeal, Stelhorn often reflected the typical Missouri Synod habit (still prevalent today) of advocating parochial education at the expense of public schools. Very often he would turn his promotional rhetoric against public schools and make them his "whipping boys." In

¹¹³Stelhorn, "Reaching Our Goal in School Enrollment," p. 66.

¹¹⁴Stelhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin X (October 1, 1940): 2.

¹¹⁵August C. Stelhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 60 (July 1925): 272.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

other words, Stellhorn saw Satan manifesting himself in the public schools of the land and saturating youth with his perverse influence. It was against this pervasive evil that the educative agency of the Lutheran school could effectively do battle.

In Stellhorn's defense, most of his anti-public education tirade appeared during his first twenty years (1921-1941) as Secretary of Schools, the critical ones for Lutheran schools. Apparently he mellowed thereafter. Regardless of this, even in his mildest moments the kindest remark that he could muster was that "the public school is no place for a Christian child; it cannot prosper spiritually there."¹¹⁷ More often than not, the strand of indoctrination as a contributory purpose of Christian Lutheran education would manifest itself through Stellhorn's complaint that children in public school

. . . are not nurtured, trained, protected, and shepherded . . . ; on the contrary, they are in the hands of teachers that may not teach the Scriptural truth, but, according to their personal views and beliefs, may and often do teach the grossest spiritual error or imbue Christian children with views and principles diametrically opposed to the Word of God.¹¹⁸

Some of the specific, serious, anti-Scriptural dangers permeating public schools were evolution, general unbiblical morals and atheism. Stellhorn spoke pointedly about their

¹¹⁷August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 59 (June 1924): 221.

¹¹⁸August C. Stellhorn, "'Pray Ye the Lord of the Harvest.' Matt. 9:38," Lutheran School Journal 73 (April 1938): 360.

existence and about the need to indoctrinate against them. He believed that "the best protection against the evils" of evolutionary theory and unbiblical morals was "the attendance of Lutheran children at Lutheran schools" because it was there that "the truth is taught and practised" and protection was provided "against falsehoods taught and practised elsewhere."¹¹⁹ Stellhorn saw great danger creeping from the public schools and their "subtle daily inculcation of an entirely wrong philosophy of life, through evolution and general unbelief"¹²⁰ But, he cautioned,

Some think that the only danger of the public school is its teaching of evolution. No, it teaches that and everything in accordance with it--in plain words, infidelity, materialism, atheism, a denial of God and everything pertaining to the soul's salvation.¹²¹

This was reason enough "to erect rescue-stations in the form of Christian day-schools for these thousands and thousands of children"¹²²

In a biting commentary directed toward the educative agency of the home, Stellhorn put the blame exactly where he felt it belonged--on the parents. He exhorted;

Now is the time to look after the home; now is the time

¹¹⁹August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 60 (March 1925): 111.

¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 58 (November-December 1923): 386-387.

¹²²Ibid.

to give children a Christian school [and] now is the time to reduce that ghastly number of children, Lutheran by birth and baptism, who are brought up in a unionistic, materialistic, and frequently atheistic spirit in lower and high schools. You who are responsible for these children, are you not a bit afraid of the consequences? Do you not see that you are bringing up a generation of Lutherans which are trained away from Lutheranism and Christianity. [T]here can be no mercy for those who, in God's own judgment, are thus neglecting the children's external welfare and devastating the Church.¹²³

As a parent, Stelhorn adhered to the same protective line of reasoning as he conceived of indoctrination as a collateral purpose in achieving the restoration of his children to their original state. He confided:

. . . as a Christian father I am responsible for them also outside of the home. I know the great force at work to lead my children astray. A Christian school will help me combat the evil forces because it takes the same positive stand that Christian parents take in the home as to what becomes a Christian. So only a good Christian school will do. I need not send my children to a school that represents the spirit of the world and only gives greater momentum and play to the evil forces at work upon my child. The dangers are great enough with both home and school positively Christian and at their best.¹²⁴

Again, from his parental perspective and from the perspective of his belief that indoctrination was a

¹²³August C. Stelhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 59 (February 1924): 61-62. By "unionistic" Stelhorn meant the prospect of Lutheran children attending public schools and maintaining church-fellowship with individuals of other denominations despite their disagreements in doctrine. His fear was that this relationship might eventually result in a belief that these doctrinal differences were inconsequential. Traditional Missouri Synod orthodoxy sees unionism as a gross violation of divine command.

¹²⁴August C. Stelhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 59 (July 1924): 271.

concomitant purpose of Lutheran education, Stellhorn viewed the Lutheran school as an investment paying dividends.¹²⁵ What were the dividends? Stellhorn again responded by reflecting his contributory indoctrination purpose.

To me as a father, it is a great satisfaction to know my children are in a safe, quiet, Christian haven, where the Word and Spirit of God rule, where the whole atmosphere is Lutheran and Christian, where teacher and pupils are of one faith and in accord with my own views, where Christian home training is continued and supplemented and not counteracted, where false views and judgments of textbooks or wrong behavior on the part of pupils are promptly corrected and brought into conformity with the will and Word of God, where my Lord Jesus Christ reigns supreme and is drawing His lambs daily nearer to His bosom, where little believers are shielded against the blindness, error and wickedness of the world.¹²⁶

There were other parental dividends of a Lutheran schooling, but suffice it to say that indoctrination was pivotal.

As is apparent, in his first twenty years as Secretary of Schools, Stellhorn said over and over again that a concomitant purpose to restoring man to his original state of perfection was indoctrination. The child must be protected from the evil, ravaging influences of the world that permeated secular education. It was the Lutheran parochial school that was to "replace the public school and guard the children against a non-Lutheran or unchristian

¹²⁵Stellhorn, "Our Lutheran Schools," p. 40.

¹²⁶Ibid.

schooling."¹²⁷ Simply, Stellsborn believed that Christian education must have as a contributory purpose indoctrination. If it did not, there would be "a constant battle against conflicting influences, a sowing on soil cultivated by others for their purposes. In a Lutheran school this stops."¹²⁸

Stellsborn had no difficulty defending his collateral purpose of indoctrination against the attacks of more liberal critics. To the Progressives, who found any form of indoctrination offensive, he summarily commented,

Teaching and training that is not founded on definite convictions of the teacher, or a parent, is senseless to the extreme And teaching that does not require the pupil or student to accept and follow is not true teaching, but mere giving of information. We Christians have in the Word of God "a sure Word" and the eternal truth, which we must very definitely urge our children to accept and follow. And so far as civic affairs are concerned, we should also have definite convictions and inculcate these upon our children and youth. In everyday life, in ordinary conduct, we again have, or should have, definite ideas which we should cause our children to accept and follow, provided those ideas are good and sound.¹²⁹

To those who proclaimed that the type of cloistering found in parochial schools led to a limited, rather narrow, knowledge of human beings in general and an un-American

¹²⁷August C. Stellsborn, "The Position of the Lutheran School," unpublished manuscript for a promotional tract, 1939, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellsborn papers, p. 1.

¹²⁸August C. Stellsborn, ed., News Service, Bulletin IX (September 1, 1931): 7.

¹²⁹August C. Stellsborn, ed., News Service, Bulletin III (March 1, 1941): 3.

posture, Stellhorn wrote:

. . . if elbow-rubbing with varied characters were a requirement of Americanism, our boys and girls get an abundance of that--more than is good for some. We do not deny that a knowledge of human beings is profitable in a good many ways after one has found his own bearing and taken a positive stand--the Biblical stand--on the questions of life, but we see no need of pitying a child for not being thrown together with all sorts of characters in the formative period of his early childhood. This is exactly what we are trying to avoid by maintaining separate schools.¹³⁰

In view of his definition and broad purposes of Christian education one can easily understand, whether one agrees with Stellhorn or not, why indoctrination was such an integral part of his contributory purposes. Indeed, for Stellhorn, "Not to 'indoctrinate' [was] pedagogical nonsense."¹³¹

Also, knowing that he believed all education to be primarily a matter of the soul, one can comprehend Stellhorn's assessment:

. . . the prerequisites for . . . soul service [are] met in a Christian school: The Christian child has been removed from the influence of worldly schools and teachers. He is in a Christian school, under the influence of a Christian teacher, in the company of Christian children.¹³²

While Stellhorn reacted strongly against the secular influence of public education, he was not against the teaching of secular subjects as a part of one's Christian education. In fact, providing for the general Christian

¹³⁰August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 59 (August 1924): 298.

¹³¹Stellhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin III (March 1, 1941): 3.

¹³²Stellhorn, "Soul Service in School," p. 5.

education of the believer was a third collateral purpose. Within his synthesis of agencies in Christian education, the goal was to be "a higher one than a good standing in secular subjects."¹³³ Yet, testified Stellhorn,

. . . to the making of a good Christian belongs also the child's general education and training--that is, everything which you Christian parents teach your children apart from religion proper, such as good, honest work, conduct around the house, proper association with other people, orderliness, politeness, common decency, and the like; and everything which lower or higher schools, or the church, or life itself teaches besides religion, such as the common school branches, the many forms of school conduct, or anything else which is good and valuable for our life on earth.¹³⁴

As is obvious, Stellhorn believed that the "influence upon the children through the daily teaching of the Word of God materially affects the work of the school in all branches of learning."¹³⁵ He adhered to a belief that Lutheran schools were "the nurseries of the Church, not alone because of their religious training, but because of their general training," therefore, a child's training in secular matters would not be looked upon "as something foreign to his spiritual nurture."¹³⁶ To that end, a concomitant purpose of Lutheran education was to provide an "education in the

¹³³August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 62 (July 1927): 269.

¹³⁴Stellhorn, "The Word 'Discipline' in the Fourth Petition," p. 174.

¹³⁵August C. Stellhorn, "Achievements in Lutheran Schools," Advance 1 (September 1954): pp. 6 and 19.

¹³⁶August C. Stellhorn, "'Take This Child Away and Nurse it for Me,'" Lutheran School Journal 73 (October 1937): 78.

common school branches," (a general education) together with a religious education.¹³⁷

There were those in Stelhorn's time, as there are those in the Missouri Synod today, who argued against the establishment of parochial schools on the basis that, while God commanded the Church to preach and teach the Word of God and administer the Sacraments, He never told the Church that providing for a general education was one of its purposes. Stelhorn sensed this anti-parochial school argument and summarily dismissed it. He wrote:

Our schools, whether elementary, secondary, or higher, are not yet generally understood. What puzzles most people . . . is that the schools are church institutions and yet engage in a general education. Although there is no Biblical proof for it, a general education is commonly assumed to be the business of parents or the State, but not of the Church. Has not the Church, it is asked, only the task of teaching and preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments? Where does the Bible say that the Church should teach the common branches of learning or provide for a general education of its members? Hence the argument: Let the parents or the State look after general education, and the Church and parents after religious instruction. Thus one can have both without the extra cost of a full-time school, whether it be on the elementary, secondary, or higher level.¹³⁸

Stelhorn hearkened back to his concomitant purpose of indoctrination as a response to this argument. He followed this by a pointed retort that called the dissidents' attention to the fact that they were

¹³⁷Stelhorn, "Address at the Southern District Convention," p. 3.

¹³⁸August C. Stelhorn, "Why the Church Engages in General Education," Parish Education 29 (October 1951): 116.

. . . perfectly willing to engage in all kinds of activities which the Lord has not directly commanded His Church. Where has the Lord commanded the erection of church buildings . . . ? Where the organization of a congregation or a synod under a constitution? Where a liturgical church service? Where most of the things we do to carry on the Lord's work? If we were to stop all activities and do away with all arrangements and agencies, which the Lord has not directly commanded or prescribed, we would cease doing what the Lord did command.¹³⁹

Taking the offensive, Stelhorn discussed the following reasons why the church must favor and support general education as a contributory purpose:

1. In order to come to faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to grow in it, every individual must be able to read or at least understand a language
2. The more extensive a person's general education, the more intelligently he can understand the Bible, the messages of the church, and the church's worship and work.
3. In the training of pastors and teachers of the church, some of whom are needed later as professors, writers, and other leaders of the church, a very extensive general education is required.
4. Man is also to "subdue the earth," to make it serve his purposes, which involves every conceivable activity of man in dealing with the physical universe.
5. Then there is the physical, mental, and moral condition of man, once perfect, but now highly imperfect, and afflicted with no end of disease, ignorance, and error. This calls for doctors, lawyers, scientists, philosophers, statesmen, etc., who will help to solve the problems of mankind.¹⁴⁰

From the above quotation, it is apparent that Stelhorn's views again reflected the educational ideas of Martin

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰August C. Stelhorn, "The General Objectives of Christian Education" (unpublished paper prepared for the Board for parish Education, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, 1948), in What's Lutheran in Education? Allan Hart Jahsmann (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960), p. 34.

Luther. Nearly all that Luther wrote on education insisted upon maintaining schools for the welfare of the church and the needs of the state. While Stellanor's emphasis on providing a general education was centered more upon the welfare of the church, he was not insensitive to the needs of the state. He believed that the public welfare was "an obligation of the Church," therefore, "necessarily also an obligation of church schools and other teaching agencies of the Church."¹⁴¹ Consequently,

. . . truly Christian schools train Christians, and Christians are not only good church members, but good individuals, wherever they may be--good fathers and mothers, good sons and daughters, good workmen, good businessmen, good neighbors, good citizens, good public officials, a great asset to human society everywhere. If there were a Christian school so intent upon benefiting only the Church that it forgot everything else, which is hardly thinkable, it would nevertheless be training good businessmen, good citizens, and the like.¹⁴²

However, for Stellanor, good citizenship was not just a by-product of the Lutheran school because

. . . the entire school curriculum, with its religious courses and common school branches, taught from a Christian viewpoint, is a unitary course in Christianity and Christian citizenship; but in that curriculum special attention is given to citizenship This is done not only because of a State requirement, but also because of a Church requirement. The Church is obligated by God to be concerned also about the welfare of the State and of human society in general.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹August C. Stellanor, "The Christian School and Good Citizenship," Parish Education 31 (June 1953): 89.

¹⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁴³*Ibid.*

Although good citizenship was a dimension of his collateral purpose for providing a general education, Stellhorn's principal argument for a general education was that the Christian school was "the one agency of the Church which . . . trains the entire man" ¹⁴⁴

A fourth and final contributory purpose in Stellhorn's scheme of things, and one that fit nicely under his principal concern of man's spiritual restoration, was the function of the Lutheran school as a missionary institution. The unchurched were to be restored and saved too, therefore, "The Lutheran school, though primarily maintained for the lambs within the fold," was also to "serve as an effective agency to bring both children and parents into the Church." ¹⁴⁵ This, to Stellhorn's way of thinking, was a valid concomitant purpose because "The Church's one obligation on earth is Christian education, be it for the winning or for the perfection and preservation of souls." ¹⁴⁶ In this sphere, Stellhorn cautioned Lutheran educators that the "first and main aim" of the Church "is, and always must be, to save men's souls, not to win them as

¹⁴⁴Stellhorn, "Why the Church Engages in General Education," p. 117.

¹⁴⁵August C. Stellhorn, "Message to the Teachers: Missionary Influence of the Schools," Lutheran School Journal 70 (June 1935): 466.

¹⁴⁶August C. Stellhorn, "Music in the Life of a Christian," Lutheran Education 87 (December 1951): 179.

members of our church."¹⁴⁷ Consequently, the object of the Lutheran school as a missionary agency was "not to increase our enrollment, but to throw out our best net for the capture and rescue of precious souls unto life everlasting."¹⁴⁸

In sum, Stellsborn's religious orientation dictated that education was principally a matter of the soul. Because true education was premised on a favorable reaction to its positive influences (a favorable reaction to negative influences was not education, but degradation or corruption), he formulated an educative synthesis of formal educational agencies that he believed would result in a true education. While acknowledging the many forces of life as combining into an informal educational agency, it was the home and the Church (with the parochial school as its most effective educative agency) that Stellsborn's religious orthodoxy saw as divinely ordained educational agencies, and which were the components of his educative synthesis of agencies. While the home was the most powerful element of the synthesis, each component had but two principal purposes in the Christian Lutheran educational processes--the pleasure and glory of God and the restoration of man to his original state. Most of Stellsborn's attention was directed to the purpose of restoration and the four concomitant

¹⁴⁷ Stellsborn, "The Question of School Tuition," p. 137.

¹⁴⁸ Stellsborn, "Message to the Teachers: Missionary Influence of the Schools," p. 467.

purposes that he believed would contribute to it. These collateral purposes were Christian training (e.g., nurture and admonition), indoctrination, providing a general education, and mission outreach.

Stellhorn's traditional Missouri Synod orthodoxy was reflected in his conception of the purposes of Lutheran education. Though he was not a systematic educational theoretician, he possessed definite convictions regarding what a Christian education was to achieve. In turn, Stellhorn also possessed a conception of the Lutheran school curriculum and educational methodology that would facilitate achievement of both his principle and collateral purposes of a Lutheran education. Chapter V will address both of these concerns.

CHAPTER V

STELLHORN'S CONCEPTION OF LUTHERAN SCHOOL CURRICULUM

AND

EDUCATIONAL METHODOLOGY

The earlier chapters of this study indicate that Stellsborn's religious orientation formed the foundation for his educational thought. They also point out that he was neither a trained educational historian nor systematic educational theorist. Stellsborn was first and foremost a school administrator and promoter. Because of his interest in immediate educational concerns, his educational thought lacked an extensive and profound theoretical dimension.

Nowhere does this lack of comprehensiveness manifest itself more than in the educational concerns addressed in this chapter--curriculum and educational methodology. As with his theology, Stellsborn's educational musings about curriculum and method are many, but are neither complete nor definitive. However, his Missouri Synod religious orientation and perceived purposes of a Christian Lutheran education do appear, at times, to control his thinking on subject matter and instructional methodology.

Stellsborn believed "that the subjects to be taught

in a Lutheran school depend on the purpose of the school."¹

Because

. . . the Lutheran philosophy of education recognizes no difference between the objectives of education and the objectives of life in all its forms; that the entire education and training, not only in spiritual but also in secular affairs and activities, must be an integral, unitary CHRISTIAN or BIBLICAL process of education and training, be that in the home, the school, or the church; . . . therefore, the entire curriculum of the Lutheran school is welded into a single unitary course of instruction and training²

In other words, the Lutheran parochial school was not to "share its training with another school" (e.g., the public school providing a general education and a Lutheran Sunday school, Week-Day school, etc., providing religious instruction), but it was to give "a unified Christian course of instruction in all branches of elementary learning" ³ For Stelthorn,

Religious instruction alone is not yet Christian training. "General education" plus "religious instruction" does not make a Christian training Only when Christian training (based on the religious instruction of the daily program) becomes the warp and woof of the school education, has one the pedagogically, Biblically, and psychologically correct

¹August C. Stelthorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), p. 121.

²August C. Stelthorn, "The Status of the Teacher: As Involved in the Eggen Case and in the Pending Amendment to the Social Security Act," Board for Parish Education Bulletin (June 1950): 4-5.

³August C. Stelthorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin IX (September 1, 1932): 3.

arrangement.⁴

While "daily, thorough, systematic teaching of the Christian doctrine and the uninterrupted, careful training of the child to translate the doctrine into life" were "paramount" in Stelhorn's curricular scheme of things, the "warp and woof" of Christian Lutheran schooling centered on the fact that

. . . the common branches of learning are enriched, since everything is presented from a distinctly Biblical point of view, and general education is employed as a means of Christian training. God is kept in the center, and the child is kept conscious of the fact that "of Him and through Him and to Him are all things" and that all of life and the whole universe reveal God and glorify Him.⁵

Stelhorn illustrated his conception of a unified religious and general curriculum by commenting that when a child is taught health and safety in a Lutheran school

. . . he is also taught what the Lord has to do with health and safety; why there is a danger against which we must guard; that the Christian is responsible for his own health and safety and that of his fellow men. All of this learning radiates and emanates from a daily intensive study and application of the Word of God, to which the first hour of the [school] day is devoted.⁶

Simply, Stelhorn believed that "every school subject should be taught from a Christian and Biblical viewpoint" ⁷

⁴August C. Stelhorn, ed., News Service," Lutheran School Journal 61 (November 1926): 427.

⁵August C. Stelhorn, "Why Parochial Schools?" Advance 1 (October 1954): 38.

⁶Ibid.

⁷August C. Stelhorn, Planning a Lutheran School (St. Louis: Board for Parish Education, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, n.d.), p. 12.

Stellhorn reflected an essentialist concept of the make-up of a Lutheran elementary school curriculum.⁸ He believed that the child "must learn things which the experience of mankind has found to be proper and right, or which God has commanded, no matter what his personal inclinations."⁹ This conservative posture was premised on the fact that

. . . there is much in education of vital importance which the child in his natural inclination refuses to take unless he is forced. Left to his inclinations or choice, he would develop into a character that would be a distinct menace in state, church, and society; and in the proportion in which he is left to his own designs will he be a menace.¹⁰

Quite obviously, while Stellhorn lived and worked during the Progressive era of American education, his ideas on curriculum (and, as will be seen later, on method) remained untouched by it.¹¹

⁸An educational doctrine, commonly attributed to William C. Bagley, which holds that there is an indispensable, common core of culture (certain knowledges, skills, attitudes, ideals, etc.) that can be identified and should be taught systematically to all, with rigorous standards of achievement. This viewpoint also regards it as a definite adult responsibility to guide education, not the child's.

⁹August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 62 (January 1927): 27.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹The progressive movement in American education embraced the experimentalism of John Dewey, but was much less specific in nature. Proponents of progressive education adhered to a belief that education could influence reform (e.g., of society). While there was wide divergency in the movement, there seemed to be consensus on the following: (1) the child should be allowed the freedom to

Even though man's experience and God's commands were the source of the Lutheran school curriculum, it devolved "mainly upon the teacher to write and compile the course of study and to keep it up to date" ¹² However, Stellanhorn would not have endeared himself to today's "Teacher-Power" advocates because, as he viewed it, it was "the congregation" that was "to approve and adopt a course for its school" ¹³ While the teacher would more than likely "write and compile" the curriculum, in the final analysis, it was "not for the teacher to determine what should and what should not be taught" without the local

develop naturally, (2) there should be heavy emphasis on the student's needs and interests, and (3) the teacher should serve as a guide to learning rather than the fount and source of all knowledge. Another key characteristic of progressivism was an emphasis on employing the scientific method in a democratic social setting. The technique often associated with this emphasis was William Heard Kilpatrick's so-called "project method" where students were to apply the method of science to solving problems. It was believed that this pedagogical approach would lead students to become better citizens of a democracy in that they would gain skill in applying the scientific method in a democratic setting to larger societal problems (e.g., economics, politics, etc.) as they matured. As will be seen, Stellanhorn saw minimal merit in the progressive approach to curriculum and methods primarily because of its stress on relative truth and a teaching approach that he deemed impractical.

¹²August C. Stellanhorn, "Message to the Teachers: A Course of Study for Every School," Lutheran School Journal 69 (January 1934): 223.

¹³Ibid., p. 222.

congregation's blessing.¹⁴ According to Stellhorn, even the teacher's daily classroom schedule was to be approved by the congregation through its Board of Education or Voter's Assembly.¹⁵

Regardless of who was to be responsible for writing, compiling, and approving a curriculum formed from man's experience and the commands of God, Stellhorn saw that "the Lutheran school does not only teach religion, but . . ."¹⁶ "some fifteen to eighteen subjects or branches."¹⁷ Stellhorn was also quick to emphasize that

A school, any school, has a strong influence, not so much because of what subjects it teaches, but because of WHAT IT BELIEVES and HOW IT LIVES. The curriculum actually takes a secondary position and the spirit of the school first.¹⁸

In spite of this apparent de-emphasis on the importance of the curriculum, there was one subject in the curriculum, that assumed a primary position for Stellhorn--religion. While Stellhorn never said it specifically, a school's

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid. To this day the practice of congregational approval of the curriculum and daily classroom schedule can still be found in a number of Missouri Synod parishes. Usually, the local congregation's elected Board of Education, serving as an arm of the Voters Assembly (the supreme decision-making body in many Synodical parishes) performs this function at its regular September meeting.

¹⁶Stellhorn, Planning a Lutheran School, p. 22.

¹⁷August C. Stellhorn, "Educational Objectives of a Lutheran School," Lutheran School Journal 67 (January 1932): 199.

¹⁸August C. Stellhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin IV (April 1, 1934): 7.

philosophy and program was based in a Lutheran education upon the fundamental Christian Lutheran tenets which could only be based on a study of religion. It is to this subject of the Lutheran school curriculum that we now turn.

Generally, Stellhorn saw the Lutheran elementary school religion curriculum becoming operative each day by opening

. . . with a hymn and with prayer, the reading of Holy Writ, the study of Biblical history, the study and application of the chief parts of the Christian doctrine, and the memorizing of a number of Bible-texts, gems from hymns, and prayers.¹⁹

While only "one hour each morning" was to be "devoted to religion" as a subject,²⁰ Stellhorn broke down "religion" per se into a number of subjects for study. These were arranged to form a composite of an entire Lutheran elementary school religion curriculum. Essentially, these principal studies were: Catechism, memory work, Bible-reading, Bible history, and missions.

In Stellhorn's concept of the Lutheran elementary school curriculum, the study of "Luther's Small Catechism, the Expositions with its many questions and answers, and its 548 Bible-passages . . ."²¹ was very important because it achieved for children

¹⁹August C. Stellhorn, The Education of My Children (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1933), p. 7.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹August C. Stellhorn, "'Why Do I Not Have Better Results?'" Lutheran School Journal 72 (March 1937): 306.

. . . a saving, active, growing, and steadfast faith in the Triune God, through an orderly study, knowledge, understanding, and application of the Christian doctrine, to the end that the individual pupil be brought to, and kept in, the right relationship with his God, have forgiveness of sins, lead a holy life, and be eternally saved.²²

To be sure, Luther's Small Catechism contained many of the theological ideas we have already discussed in Chapter II of this study and "if taken seriously," would "completely remake any human being"²³ thus facilitating the restorative purpose of a Lutheran education in Stellhorn's scheme of things.

Closely aligned to the study of the Catechism was memory work. In addition to a study of the Catechism, Stellhorn saw the need of Lutheran elementary pupils "to acquire a treasure of memory gems" from the Bible and the Lutheran hymnal.²⁴ Stellhorn's rationale for having memory work as part of the religion curriculum was premised on his belief that:

We do not only want the children to know the Catechism facts, but the exact language in which the Catechism teaches the facts; not only certain Scriptural facts, but the exact words from Scripture in which these facts are taught; not merely the facts as contained in some hymn-stanzas, but the meter, rhyme, and poetry in which

²²August C. Stellhorn, Manual for Lutheran Saturday-Schools, Summer-Schools, and Week-Day Religious Instruction (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1935), p. 20.

²³Stellhorn, "'Why do I Not Have Better Results?'" p., 307.

²⁴Stellhorn, Manual for Lutheran Saturday-Schools, p. 33.

these facts are expressed. In other words, we want the children to have the actual source-material in which the chief things of Christianity are taught committed to memory for ready use without a book, wherever they may be. But more, we want them to be particularly acquainted with and at home in this material, so that when they hear it quoted at any time, they at once feel like meeting an intimate acquaintance, so to speak We also want children to put this material to use for themselves, by meditating upon it; for frequent quotation to others, especially in cases of need. We want this material to be ever present, in order to brace up and nourish their faith, to lead them along the paths of righteousness, to keep them in temptations, to serve as weapons against the spiritual enemies, to brighten for them the way to life eternal.²⁵

The latter portion of the above quotation again reflects Stellhorn's restoration-salvation purpose of a Lutheran education.

A third and concomitant study in Stellhorn's structured Lutheran elementary school religion curriculum was Bible-reading. Bible-reading (or Bible-study) was to be included in the religion curriculum because it would introduce the child "to the Bible--its arrangement and content. . . ;" it would enhance the pupil's "ability to locate passages or parts of the Bible from source indications"; it would make "the children diligent and appreciative readers of the Bible"; it would "create in them a holy regard and respect for the Word of God"; it would lend itself to showing "the child how to read and meditate

²⁵ August C. Stellhorn, "Memory Work, with Special Reference to the 'Graded Memory Course for Lutheran Sunday Schools,'" unpublished essay delivered to the meeting of the Sunday-School Association, Port Hudson, Missouri, May 20, 1934, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellhorn papers, p. 3.

for personal edification and spiritual strength"; and, finally, it would have the pupil reading and searching "for spiritual enlightenment and knowledge."²⁶ Bible-reading was not to be isolated from other areas of the religion curriculum, but was to be correlated with them. As Stellhorn pointed out:

Bible-study is the subject in which we should use the Bible itself, not alone for general devotional purposes and to acquaint the pupil with its general arrangement, but to extend the studies begun in Catechism and Bible History. This includes that pupils should be encouraged and led to make much use of the Bible in connection with their Catechism and Bible-history lessons.²⁷

Bible history as a part of the religion curriculum was, for Stellhorn, more limited in scope than either Catechism or Bible-reading. The study of Bible history in the Lutheran elementary school religion curriculum dealt "with the historical revelations in Scripture" and was to confine "itself to the doctrinal teachings embodied or exemplified in this phase of Holy Writ."²⁸ As was established in Chapter II, Stellhorn viewed the Bible, in part as history. He wrote that "The very heart of

²⁶Stellhorn, Manual for Lutheran Saturday-Schools, p. 39.

²⁷August C. Stellhorn, "Bible History and Our New Text-Book," Lutheran School Journal 72 (October 1936): 77.

²⁸Ibid., p. 74.

Scripture is the historical unfolding of God's plan of salvation for sinful mankind."²⁹ Consequently, in the Lutheran elementary school religion curriculum,

The study of Biblical history is the easiest, most concrete, and most logical approach to the study of Scripture itself or of its teachings. There is nothing that more effectively supports the teaching or learning of Bible doctrine than a knowledge of Bible history.³⁰

Stellhorn continued and cautioned that

. . . it must be remembered that Biblical history is not alone a historical matter; it, too, is in all its parts the eternal Word of God, inspired by the Holy Ghost, given for our instruction, "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," "able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," [II Tim. 3, 15-17.]³¹

In the quotation above one again senses the restoration of man to his original state as a partial explanation for including Bible history in the religion curriculum.

Just as Bible-reading was not to be isolated, Bible history, too, was to be correlated with other religious studies. As Stellhorn pointed out:

To the more comprehensive subject of Catechism [Bible history] is a major Biblical basis and serves to illustrate and illuminate its systematic presentation of the Christian doctrine. To the subject of Bible-study, [Bible history] serves as a fundamental framework and important introduction.³²

Stellhorn believed that Bible history was not to

²⁹Ibid., p. 75.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

"treat the entire historical content of the Bible, but rather a chain of Biblical accounts, lifted out of the voluminous and detailed Biblical record and arranged in chronological order."³³ (This type of treatment is reflected in his compilation of the Advanced Bible History.) Stellhorn also saw a need to adapt the emphasis in this area of the religious curriculum to the maturity level of the Lutheran elementary school pupil. As he conceived of Bible history as a subject for the primary grade levels, "the emphasis" was to be "on the individual Bible-story, with some attention to historical continuity." In the upper grades there was to be "an increased emphasis on history, although the individual story" was to remain "the chief consideration."³⁴

A fifth concentration in the Lutheran school's religion curriculum was to be a concern with Church history. There is no evidence to indicate that Stellhorn made a case for correlating Church history with the other subjects in the religion curriculum, though one strongly suspects that he would support such a correlation. Simply, the religious "curriculum in Church history for Lutheran schools" would "impress the child with the teachings of Church history"³⁵ Like all other subjects, Church history

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵August C. Stellhorn, "A Curriculum in Church

was to make the student "wiser or a better person, and not merely tickle his curiosity, engage him interestingly, and fill his mind with facts."³⁶ While the principal aim of Church history was "not merely to inculcate upon [the student's] memory a story, a course of events or facts and data," a curriculum in Church history for Lutheran elementary schools did have an immediate aim--equipping "the child with historical knowledge, from which to draw or upon which to base conclusions that educate, benefit, or make us wise."³⁷ Beyond this, Stelhorn does not offer Lutheran curriculum theorists a rationale for Church history's inclusion in the Lutheran elementary school's curriculum in religion. Simply, the object of Church history was "to give the child a fair idea of the origin of his Church . . . including that of the local congregation."³⁸

It should be remembered from Chapter IV that for Stelhorn one of the concomitant purposes of Lutheran education was to provide mission outreach. To that end he advocated the study of Synodical and local mission work in Lutheran elementary schools as another principal component of the religion curriculum. Not only was the Lutheran

History for Lutheran Schools," unpublished essay delivered to the California, Missouri, Circuit Conference of Pastors and Teachers, Boonville, Missouri, February 21, 1942, Concordia Historical Institute, Stelhorn papers, p. 1.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Stelhorn, Manual for Lutheran Saturday-Schools, p. 53.

school's religious curriculum to provide a "fair idea" of the origins of the Lutheran Church in general and the child's local congregation in particular, but it was also to provide a "fair idea . . . of its work, including that of the local congregation."³⁹ Not surprisingly, especially in light of his collateral purpose of mission outreach, Stellsborn believed that the study of Synodical and local mission work would lead the child to acquire and maintain

. . . such a high and grateful regard for [his] own salvation, Christian estate on earth, the Word of God and the Sacraments, and the Church and its institutions . . . ; such fear, love . . . , and trust . . . in God; such a realization of the pitiful condition and eternal fate of the unbelievers . . . that the idea of saving others will become an irresistible and compelling force within [the student's] hearts, which will govern [his] thoughts, words, and deeds.⁴⁰

Stellsborn believed that the study of missions could easily be correlated with other subjects, especially those studies in the religion curriculum. For example, in Bible-reading "parts of the Bible could be read which present concrete cases of mission work"⁴¹ Inasmuch as the history of the Missouri Synod "is a history of mission work," it, too, could be correlated to the study of missions by allowing the children to live through Synodical history "and catch the

³⁹Stellsborn, "A Curriculum in Church History," p. 1.

⁴⁰August C. Stellsborn, "An Outline for the Study of Mission Work in Our Lutheran Parochial Schools," mimeographed letter sent to the teachers of the Missouri Synod, August 3, 1933, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellsborn papers, p. 1.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 3.

spirit of the fathers."⁴² One senses not only Stelhorn's concern for man's restoration, but also his hero-worship of the Synod's forefathers.

The Lutheran school's curriculum in religion contained concerns for Stelhorn which, while not to be considered subjects per se, were still to be emphasized or taught. For example, he believed that it was good for the Lutheran elementary schools "to teach prayers and the art of making prayers."⁴³ He believed that the religion curriculum should allow for the commemoration of some of the principal Lutheran and Synodical historical events because this would instill in students "a Lutheran consciousness."⁴⁴ And, if this were not enough, Stelhorn saw the content of the Lutheran school's curriculum in religion focusing on a program of home rehabilitation.⁴⁵

Suffice it to say that Stelhorn viewed the study of all the aforementioned as working toward the "one cardinal object of all religious instruction": "to fortify and strengthen the tender faith of the little ones against their spiritual enemies and lead them to eternal

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³August C. Stelhorn, "Teaching Children to Pray," Lutheran School Journal 73 (March 1938): 213.

⁴⁴August C. Stelhorn, "Suggested Activities for Luther's Birthday," Lutheran School Journal 71 (November 1935): 124.

⁴⁵August C. Stelhorn, "Home Rehabilitation and the School," Lutheran School Journal 71 (April 1936): 366.

salvation" ⁴⁶

Before turning our attention to those subjects that would provide a general education, it is important to point out that within his curricular framework Stellhorn saw the curriculum in religion as laying "the foundation for all other subjects and [forming] the center of the curriculum." ⁴⁷ Stellhorn further elaborated that

Each of the other subjects is presented from the Christian viewpoint and made to serve as a course in Christian training. This is particularly true of the content subjects. At the same time no common school branch is turned into a course of religious teaching. Its primary purpose is nowhere disturbed but ⁴⁸ its religious significance and viewpoint are set forth.

It is this Stellhorn perspective that, at times, makes it difficult to delineate clearly which subjects belonged to the common branch curriculum and which were to be considered as part of the curriculum in religion.

The subject of music is a good case in point. Stellhorn believed that "Next to religion, music is said to affect our hearts and characters most." ⁴⁹ Accordingly, music in the Lutheran elementary school curriculum had a definite spiritual dimension. Stellhorn believed that a

⁴⁶August C. Stellhorn, "Monthly Message: Knowing, Liking, and Living the Catechism," Lutheran School Journal 65 (October 1929): 82.

⁴⁷August C. Stellhorn, Foreword to General Course of Study for Lutheran Elementary Schools by William A. Kramer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1943), p. v.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 63 (March 1928): 115.

curriculum in music should (1) "assist in preparing children for correct and appreciative singing in divine services, at home, and elsewhere," (2) "instill . . . an understanding and love for the Lutheran chorale and other worth-while sacred music," and (3) give children "a limited repertory of chorales and other Christian songs for special church festivals or other occasions in life."⁵⁰ One receives the distinct impression that the music curriculum would consist solely of religious music. Consequently, singing and listening to hymns, Bach chorales, etc., would be the standard fare and would form an integral part of religious study. Stellhorn's writings did not do much to alleviate this general impression as is evidenced by the following posture and query: "If he who loves the world does not have the love of the Father in his heart, how can he who loves jazz have any appreciation for the spiritual hymns that his worldly heart needs?"⁵¹ One needs to question Stellhorn's ability to separate preference from his religion. He strengthened this impression even further when he wrote:

. . . singing in itself, though always a stimulus and an expression for the emotions, is not per se a power for good. Through the low-class croonings, yellings, and howlings over the radio . . . the devil is evidently exerting a powerful influence over millions of souls every day, stirring up in them, and nurturing, the

⁵⁰Stellhorn, Manual for Lutheran Saturday-Schools, p. 51.

⁵¹Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 63 (March 1926): 115.

basest of emotions.⁵²

Stellhorn's elitism even carried over into his ideas on selecting hymns for a purely religious music curriculum. It was necessary, he asserted

. . . that we be on our guard in the selection of our English hymns and hymn-tunes; for actual practise has proved that with many just the hymns and tunes of least worth from a Lutheran or musical standpoint have been such a novelty and exerted such an appeal as to be sung almost to the exclusion of the better stock.⁵³

By "better stock" Stellhorn meant those hymns written by Martin Luther and/or stemming from the Reformation period that were truly Biblical in nature, at least from his perspective. The issue for teachers was:

Do we want to sing ourselves gradually out of a purely Lutheran hymnology just because some of the lighter and more sentimental hymns have a greater appeal [and is] the appeal of the more inferior hymns really the appeal that we should extend to our people in . . . school and which we should nurture there . . . ?⁵⁴

For Stellhorn, then, the selection of song material for the music curriculum was

. . . of prime importance; not only the hymns, however, but also the other songs which we train our children to sing. And with the right kind of material goes the development or maintenance of real interest in that kind of material.⁵⁵

⁵²August C. Stellhorn, "Monthly Message: Singing in Our Schools and Congregations," Lutheran School Journal 65 (January 1930): 220.

⁵³Ibid., p. 221.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid.

And who was to make the selection of the "right kind" of musical material for the curriculum in music? It was the Lutheran school teacher.

Just as they have been called to interest their . . . pupils in the Word of God and the true Lutheran doctrine, which to every man by nature are distasteful, so they have the duty to interest their . . . pupils in the best of hymns and sound church music generally, for these interests and influences are alike.⁵⁶

In spite of his rather provincial view of the Lutheran elementary school music curriculum, Stellhorn recognized the need to enter the secular sphere because "People do not know what is really good music. Everywhere . . . they hear and see that shallow stuff predominates and select accordingly."⁵⁷ Rest assured that Stellhorn's idea of "really good music" was not of the popular variety, but, rather, classical music. It would appear that "a Mozart symphony" rather than a "questionable 'funny record'" took precedence in the selection process.⁵⁸ In addition, Stellhorn believed that "a course of instruction in tone production and music-reading"⁵⁹ should supplement the Lutheran school's curriculum in religious and secular music appreciation because "much

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 221-222.

⁵⁷August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 60 (April 1925): 157.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹August C. Stellhorn, "Monthly Message: A Message to the Teachers," Lutheran School Journal 65 (December 1929): 175.

remains to be done in our schools before we shall have uniformly beautiful singing."⁶⁰

In addition to music (which appeared to be both a component of the religion curriculum as well as part of the general education curriculum of the Lutheran elementary school) Stellhorn identified and commented on other subjects (or common branches of learning) in the general education curriculum appropriate to Lutheran elementary schools as follows:

The child learns to read and is thereby given the key to all further book study. He learns to write and is thereby enabled to express himself on paper and to communicate with his fellow-men at a distance. He learns to speak, write, and understand languages correctly. He is led back into history, where he is acquainted with men and events. In geography he is led around the globe and acquainted with conditions on earth outside of his immediate surroundings. In physiology he is shown the intricacies of the human body and how to care for it. In literature he is acquainted with the masters in writing and their products. In nature he is acquainted with the plant, animal, and mineral kingdoms. His skill is developed in penmanship, drawing, manual, and domestic science.⁶¹

As can be seen from the above quotation, Stellhorn conceived of the general education curriculum of a Lutheran elementary school in broad fashion. Subjects to be included under this large umbrella were: reading, writing, language, history, geography, physiology, literature, nature, penmanship, drawing (art), manual training, and domestic science. It is

⁶⁰Stellhorn, "Monthly Message: Singing in Our Schools and Congregations," p. 222.

⁶¹August C. Stellhorn, The Meaning of a Lutheran Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1928), p. 20.

interesting to note that arithmetic is absent from his list. Lest we assume that Stellhorn did not consider arithmetic part of a child's elementary Lutheran education, it would probably be accurate to posit that its absence was more of an oversight than an indication that he did not see it as a curriculum component in one's general education.

Together with the arithmetic oversight, Stellhorn also, unfortunately, did not comment specifically on how all the aforementioned common branches fit into the general education curriculum. In fact, even those branches that were treated by Stellhorn were done in an extremely superficial manner. Those common branches that he chose to discuss were: reading, phonics, penmanship, history, civics, geography, manual training, German, and physical education (or, as he called it, play). As can be seen, certain subjects (e.g., phonics, civics, German, and physical education) were not contained in the earlier listing. In spite of this lack of systematization, we now will turn our attention to Stellhorn's conception of those curricular branches that he discussed, however superficially.

As with contemporary educators, Stellhorn believed that the teaching of reading as a general education subject was extremely important. His rationale parroted that of Luther in that Stellhorn believed that

The highest and, at the same time, most important

goal in reading is for the Christian child to read the Word of God effectively. His reading course should be so designed that he will read himself into the Church and the Bible; not out of them⁶²

Consequently, "objectional selections or items" were to be eliminated from the Lutheran school's reading curriculum resulting in a program that consisted of material, twenty percent of which at least was to be "of . . . positively Christian or Lutheran character."⁶³ The non-Christian or non-Lutheran selections in the Lutheran school's reading curriculum could be of a secular variety, but certainly not in opposition to the Christian tenets that Stellhorn so courageously clung to. Secular selections in the reading curriculum could, according to Stellhorn, include "both the older classics and good modern materials of various sorts."⁶⁴ While he did not insist that the Lutheran pupil "should read only what has become an indisputable classic,"⁶⁵ and that "not all fanciful material is harmful,"⁶⁶ Stellhorn strongly believed that selections about "fairies, goblins, brownies, and other spirits, which

⁶²August C. Stellhorn, "The Bobbs-Merrill Readers, Concordia Edition." Lutheran School Journal 62 (August 1927): 290.

⁶³August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 59 (April 1924): 156.

⁶⁴August C. Stellhorn, "The Bobbs-Merrill Readers, Concordia Edition," Lutheran School Journal 62 (April 1927): 128.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 131.

usually . . . take the place of angels or devils" were inappropriate for a Lutheran school's reading curriculum content.⁶⁷ Also to be obliterated were "the so-called 'Humorous Section' because of much nonsensical stuff there presented."⁶⁸

It was with this somewhat protective perspective that Stellhorn, together with several other teachers, revised the Bobbs-Merrill Readers. This resulted in the so-called "Concordia Edition" of the same. Through this revision, one can gain further insight into Stellhorn's conception of reading as a component in the Lutheran elementary school curriculum. In choosing selections for the Concordia Edition of the Bobbs-Merrill Readers for use in Lutheran elementary schools, Stellhorn provided the following curricular insight:

Some [selections] are suggested for silent reading, others for oral reading; some lessons are to be studied intensively, others to be read more extensively; and still others to be read for the mere pleasure of reading them. Pupils are trained to read for definite facts, for information, for proof of certain truths, for judgment of characters, actions, principles, for the purpose of picturing scenes, for enjoying the beauty of language, for discretion in the selection of materials, for edification and spiritual strength. They are trained to use the dictionary, to observe fitting expressions, to emulate good writers, to reproduce, paraphrase, outline, organize, and put to use what has been read. They are acquainted with a large variety of older and more recent literary productions and their

⁶⁷August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 60 (September 1925): 350.

⁶⁸August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 64 (March 1929): 109.

authors, led into the Bible, Christian literature, and Lutheran church history, guided in the selection of outside reading, and imbued with a desire to read what is worthwhile. In a word, . . . to prepare the child for the common requirements in actual life situations.⁶⁹

It would seem that in addition to being correlated to the religious curriculum, reading formed the heart and core of the language arts and life as well.

Stellhorn appeared to intimate that "drills in phonics" were a concomitant component to the Lutheran school curriculum in reading also, but he never elaborated on the subject any further. It is probably more correct to assume that Stellhorn viewed phonics as a method. Consequently, we shall reserve a discussion of it for the final portion of this chapter.

As a final subject in what today is called the language arts, Stellhorn commented on penmanship. Beyond a few methodological recommendations, which shall be treated shortly, Stellhorn added very little except that penmanship was to be part of the Lutheran school's general education curriculum.

Stellhorn conceived of social studies as having to do primarily with people; consequently, he commented on the following: history, civics, and geography.⁷⁰ Chapter III has already explored Stellhorn's conception of Lutheran

⁶⁹Stellhorn, "The Bobbs-Merrill Readers, Concordia Edition," Lutheran School Journal 62 (August 1927): 288.

⁷⁰August C. Stellhorn, "The General Curriculum: Geography," Lutheran School Journal 63 (January 1928): 6.

educational history with its heavy emphasis on the Church fathers, hero-worship, a parochial celebrationism, all undergirded by a providential perspective. Unfortunately, Stellsborn did not provide a similar conception of his rationale for the inclusion of history in the general education curriculum of the Lutheran elementary school. We can only assume that the study of history was premised on the same providential theory and its related emphases. Stellsborn did caution Lutheran educators to beware of a history curriculum whose content was dictated by anti-Christian textbooks. Consequently, he reflected a protective attitude in this sphere also. He wrote:

Watch the Old World-background books in history. Of late they reach back to the "beginning of civilization," which they commonly assign to the early Egyptians, about 2,000 years after Creation, but also discuss with amusing detail the "savage life" of man in "prehistoric times," meaning the era antedating the first records of the world's history. In so doing, they ignore or disavow and, by the same token, deny and contradict about 2,000 years of Bible history or divine truth.⁷¹

Obviously, if the Lutheran school curriculum was to provide unified studies in religious and general education, Stellsborn could not have any contradictions. To those that argued that Lutheran teachers could clarify contradictions in the history curriculum's content, Stellsborn replied:

Yes; but remember a few things in this connection: The children may agree with you; they may even ridicule such foolishness; yet . . . "It is hard to make a child

⁷¹August C. Stellsborn, "Message to the Teachers: Dangerous History Text-Books," Lutheran School Journal 69 (May 1934): 415.

believe that the author of a text-book is all wrong." Furthermore, your Bible-history instruction dealing with the period in question treats little or not at all of the civilization of early man, and the child may easily draw the conclusion: Adam lived a life of a caveman. Or the child may believe both the Bible and his history book, not realizing how much they contradict each other, until such time when his reason may cling to the very plausible history story which in high school and college is elaborated to him.⁷²

Simply put, Stelhorn believed that it was "wicked impertinence to ignore and contradict the Bible account of civilization."⁷³

Stelhorn envisioned civics as a subject offering under social studies in the general education curriculum of the Lutheran school. For him, civics as a subject included a number of items and reflected the influence of and correlation to the religion curriculum. Civics was to include

. . . government as an institution of God; a study of American Government, local, State, and Federal; the God-given purposes and benefits of government and the duties of citizens toward their government and public welfare; obedience to laws and ordinances for conscience' sake and counteraction against the pernicious idea of "beating the law" in the hope of not being caught; understanding of the meaning of good Christian citizenship in the wider sense of personal conduct in every walk of life and all human relationships; the study of current events in the light of the Word of God and Civic welfare; interest and proper participation in public affairs; cooperation with fellow citizens in local projects, intelligent use of the ballot box; support and encouragement of right-minded public officials; participation in various public welfare and charitable endeavors; a running correlation of school subjects to civic matters,

⁷²Ibid., p. 416.

⁷³Ibid.

especially Religion, History, and geography.⁷⁴

The aforementioned topics were not meant to be comprehensive, but a fair indication of what Stellsborn meant is seen in his view of civics as a component of the general education curriculum.⁷⁵

Geography was the third subject which Stellsborn considered to be part of the social studies. His rationale for geography's inclusion in a general Lutheran elementary school curriculum centered on the view that while "geography is . . . a study of the world as the habitation of man and other creatures, of forces and laws of nature," its principal concern was with the "foremost of all visible creatures, man, whom the Lord has appointed to replenish the earth and rule over it, and with his life and activities under varying natural conditions."⁷⁶ Stellsborn's religious orientation dictated that the study of geography perhaps afforded more "insight into the great handiwork of" God than any other subject excepting, of course, religion. His defense of this view focused on the following:

a. The Scriptures, notably the Psalter and other prophetic books, abound in references to geographical phenomena which show the greatness of the Lord.

b. It inspires a Christian with awe and admiration for

⁷⁴ August C. Stellsborn, "The Christian School and Good Citizenship," Parish Education 31 (June 1953): 88-89.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 89.

⁷⁶ Stellsborn, "The General Curriculum: Geography," p. 6.

the power and wisdom of God, as well as for His mercy and long-suffering, when contemplating . . . the vastness of the universe; . . . the exact movements of the planets; . . . the forces of nature . . . ; land formations . . . ; vegetation . . . ; animals and insects; . . . mineral and other natural resources; and . . . the effect of all these on man in various communities and on the works and progress or failure of man in this world.

c. It will make the Christian realize both the greatness of God and his own insignificance, at the same time teaching him to make profitable use of the things about him in a God-pleasing way and fulfilling his commission to replenish the earth and rule over it.⁷⁷

Stellhorn's curricular rationale for geography was not entirely centered in his religious orientation. He recognized that the study of geography possessed practical value also in that it could assist

1. In orienting oneself readily in the reading of current publications and literature, in which frequent geographical allusions occur;
2. In properly interpreting such geographical items on the basis of one's knowledge of the world;
3. In deciding on a course of action because of one's familiarity with the working of geographical principles in concrete cases;
4. In progressing in one's continued growth in geographical knowledge and experience in after-school days;
5. In adjusting oneself to one's physiographic, economic, social, and political environment;
6. In maintaining proper relationships with people of other localities, nations, or races, and in better understanding them if they are residing in one's own locality;
7. In⁷⁸ business, commerce, vocation, travel and the like.

Added to this practical secular value, Stellhorn believed that geography had a cultural value because it could "be likened to . . . living with people and in countries

⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 7-8.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 7.

studied," just as if one were traveling in that country; it engendered "local and national patriotism, a sympathetic attitude toward other nations and races, and an enlightened outlook upon the world"; it increased "one's abilities and experiences in life, the desire to learn of, and profit by, the activities and experiences of others, and one's general educational status"; and finally, it made

. . . for more intelligent reading, study, and action; greater wisdom in all every-day affairs; greater ability to adapt oneself to existing conditions; skill in solving many ordinary problems of life; ideals of home and national life⁷⁹

It appeared that the specific content of the Lutheran elementary school's geography curriculum, unlike history, could be dictated by standard geography textbooks. Stellhorn wrote:

Extensive investigations have been made to ascertain the material that should be found in geography text-books, and these investigations have proved that current books measure up well to the requirements or may be easily adapted to them. The principal source of material is, therefore, a good, modern text-book in the hands of the pupil and various texts and other reference materials in the school library.⁸⁰

While the principal source of course content in geography was the standard textbook, Stellhorn recognized that

. . . much very valuable material is also found in current publications. There is no notable event but is mapped, pictured, and geographically described in newspapers and magazines. These items are particularly valuable because there is an interesting event attached to each of them and a particular reason for studying

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 8.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 8-9.

them. The fact is, geographical places, also those in the text-books, should be studied for the human interest that attaches to them, and according to that principle the casual items serve as examples of live geography study and of proper motivation.⁸¹

Stellhorn also saw history, literature, religion, the travels of pupils and teachers, and their reading of books on travel as fruitful sources of content material for the Lutheran school's course in geography.⁸²

While his aforementioned treatment of geography as a general education curriculum component is superficial, Stellhorn's discussion of those remaining components that he chose to focus upon in his curricular writings (e.g., manual training, foreign language, and physical education) borders on being utterly shallow. For example, his conception of manual training in the Lutheran elementary school curriculum was nothing more than each male student undertaking "to refinish his own and one other desk in the room if the girls do not participate."⁸³ If the school was in such a fortunate position to have desks or other furniture that was in good condition, Stellhorn not too subtly intimated that "they may need cleaning and polishing."⁸⁴ So much for manual training! Out of fairness, it should be pointed out

⁸¹Ibid., p. 9.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³August C. Stellhorn, "Message to the Teachers: Opportunity for a Little Manual Training," Lutheran School Journal 65 (April 1930): 369.

⁸⁴Ibid.

that Stellhorn's recommendation for "a little manual training" in the schools came during the throes of the Depression and was probably more a product of expediency than of enlightened curriculum theory.

The same lack of depth can be found in the two remaining subjects of the general education curriculum that Stellhorn chose to treat. About foreign language, Stellhorn believed that "Even an elementary knowledge" would have been "an educational asset to the child."⁸⁵ The language? German, of course!⁸⁶ In the sphere of physical education, Stellhorn's documents appear to speak only of play. The child's physical education period or "play-hour . . . should free him from the strait-jacket of doing things in order."⁸⁷ Recognizing a teacher's liability for negligence, Stellhorn did caution that "all playing . . . , whether organized and led by the teacher or not, must be watched and directed by the teacher."⁸⁸ Once again, in Stellhorn's defense, it could safely be assumed that a curriculum in physical education was viewed as frivolous in Synodical educational circles. This contention might be supported by the few gymnasiums that were included in Lutheran school

⁸⁵ August C. Stellhorn, "Message to the Teachers: Various Reports," Lutheran School Journal 69 (March 1934): 322.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 60 (June 1925): 237.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

archetectural plans, especially during the early years of Stellhorn's role as Secretary of Schools.

As shall be seen shortly, Stellhorn's lack of profundity and depth was not reserved only for his views on the Lutheran school curriculum; it also manifested itself as he treated methods of teaching. Stellhorn recognized the importance of methodology in teaching when he confessed that "next to the influence of the Holy Spirit, it is the type of teaching that counts."⁸⁹ Unfortunately, he never put down a definitive statement as to what type of teaching really counted. Upon first glance, there is a temptation to put Stellhorn into a methodologically eclectic camp. However, there is too much of an essentialistic conservatism in his methodological musings for one to be safe in doing so. Stellhorn could eliminate certain teaching methods at the outset because they ran counter "to the pedagogy of Jesus."⁹⁰ To Stellhorn's way of thinking these included

The theories of the mechanists, who believe that all human conduct is mechanically determined, and is not the result of direct choice. The proponents of the Annoyer-Natierier Psychology, developed chiefly by Thorndike, with its roots in the animal kingdom; it is held chiefly by the so-called Behaviorists. Its theory is that children can be properly trained by leading them through a sufficient number of annoying or satisfying

⁸⁹ August C. Stellhorn, "Origin and Anniversary of the Schwan Catechism," Lutheran School Journal 79 (January 1944): 203.

⁹⁰ August C. Stellhorn, "The Pedagogy of Jesus," unpublished essay delivered to the Western District Teachers Conference, Jefferson City, Missouri, August 21, 1934, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellhorn papers, p. 12.

situations in life to make them shun the one and desire the other. Its greatest fault is that it is thoroughly selfish. The next to be criticized are those who believe that religious ideals can be developed through proper social relationships,--the proponents of the social gospel. Then there are the pragmatists, who do not believe in a permanent truth, and who believe only such things true which have been found to be true. These people destroy the whole foundation of Christianity and seemingly keep everybody constantly in the air. Then there are those who maintain that what we Lutherans would call being moved by the Holy Spirit is due solely to man's misinterpretation of his own bodily or mental processes; in other words, that the manifestations of the New Men are physical or mental illusion. Then there are mentioned that believe the religious educative process is limited to what pupils learn in concrete life-situations. Then those who do not believe that the Christian religion has any definite message, but is only a continuing program of social experimentation. And finally those who may like a curriculum-centered, a child-centered, or a life-centered, but not a Christ-centered program of religious education.⁹¹

One senses, in part, an anti-Progressive posture in the above quotation. While Stellanor adhered to the belief that the Lutheran school "should make every effort . . . to naturalize and humanize its form of instruction and training," he saw the Progressive extreme,

. . . in which "both the objective and the method of education should be activity", which "does not aim at subject-matter, but at life properly lived", not at the academic mastery of information and skills, but rather a continuity of high-grade human living, "not at static factors of the personality, but at a continuity of human behavior," where "the method is high-grade living", and transmissive teaching and formal academic learning are relegated to the background, [as being] fraught with dangers and impractical impossibilities.⁹²

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²August C. Stellanor, ed., News Service, Bulletin X (October 1, 1935): 8.

Stellhorn was none too specific on Progressivism's dangers, but one can safely speculate that relative truth would cause him considerable theological consternation. Stellhorn did allude to at least one impossibility when he commented that "the project method as with the problem or socialized method" was "close to the natural way of learning, but hard for the individual teacher to handle, and always in danger of slighting the necessary systematic study and drill of fundamentals."⁹³ It would appear that herein lay the crux of Stellhorn's anti-Progressive stance because it was his view that "the school, unnatural as it may be, has been established for the very purpose of giving systematic instruction and training in the essentials of large subjects."⁹⁴ While he did not negate the Progressive propensity for specialization (e.g., in geography, studying parts of the world rather than providing students a general knowledge of the whole world), he believed that specialization as a teaching approach could be taken up later or become part of the school work, but it must never "supplant subject study."⁹⁵ Reflecting a pedagogical conservatism, Stellhorn wrote that

In view of what formal textbook schooling has done for humanity, the trend away from it, in professional

⁹³August C. Stellhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin III (March 1, 1930): 6.

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Ibid.

theory, must at least, for the time being, be looked upon as an experiment. A school . . . is in itself an organized, systematized, standardized factor in education. It will never meet all the demands of education. The home and life outside of school does this to a much greater degree.⁹⁶

As Stellhorn retorted to the Progressives:

A school is, after all, a school. It will be quite impossible to make it conform to life proper, and thus make high-grade living the method; though to a degree this is not only possible, but also desirable. But the chief danger . . . lies in the discouragement of formal (and, if you will, text-book) inculcation of knowledge⁹⁷

Within this sphere, Stellhorn cautioned Lutheran schools to "maintain their bearings" because he believed that some day the methodological "pendulum" would "again swing back to a sane central position."⁹⁸

All this is not to say that Stellhorn was diametrically opposed to pupil activity as a teaching approach. He believed that within a classroom "there should be a maximum of pupil activity and a minimum of teacher activity."⁹⁹ However, cautioned Stellhorn

. . . some teachers . . . misunderstand pupil activity. So long as pupils are heard speaking or seen active a great deal, they think they have pupil activity. They forget that a pupil can be extremely active sitting still or saying nothing--that is, mentally, emotionally, or volitionally active. They

⁹⁶Stellhorn, ed., News Service, Bulletin X (October 1, 1935): 9.

⁹⁷Ibid., pp. 8-9.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 9.

⁹⁹August C. Stellhorn, The Beginning Teacher (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1946), p. 34.

often confuse physical action, including speech, with the more important inner activity.¹⁰⁰

Evidently a goodly amount of this "inner activity" led Stellhorn to view the process of teaching as "thought exchange between teacher and pupil" ¹⁰¹ Consequently, the method of questions and answers was, to Stellhorn, "particularly effective in discussing and impressing a lesson." ¹⁰² Consistent with his concept of the teaching process as an exchange of thoughts between teacher and pupil, Stellhorn viewed as the "purpose of questioning . . . to have a progressive exchange of ideas between instructor and pupil," with "the questioner taking the lead." ¹⁰³ When using this method, the teacher was to formulate questions "logically one upon the other in such a manner that questions and answers together set forth a definite line of thought or a message." ¹⁰⁴ Stellhorn provided a glimpse of how he might have utilized the question-and-answer method when he wrote:

The underlying idea is not to ask a large number of very easy questions so that one may have a constant flow of responses, but rather to prepare and ask all necessary questions that will lead most directly to the goal

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹August C. Stellhorn, "Message to the Teachers: School-Teaching Becoming More Difficult," Lutheran School Journal 68 (April 1933): 365.

¹⁰²Stellhorn, The Beginning Teacher, p. 27.

¹⁰³Ibid.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

without omitting any important details.

Every question should, of course, be easy in the sense that it is definite and that the average pupil can discover the answer, either from memory or from his textbook or from the previous question and answer; yet, an attempt should be made to keep it weighty and thought provoking.

It is worthwhile, as often as possible, to write out a set of questions and answers making sure: 1) That every question is definite; 2) that it follow logically upon the previous question and answer; 3) that the average child can be expected to answer or to find the answer; 4) that particularly easy questions are interspersed for weaker or younger pupils (all should participate); 5) that the whole leads progressively and directly toward the lesson goal (the achievement of the lesson aim).¹⁰⁵

Providing an even more practical glimpse of his revered pedagogical approach, Stellanhorn formulated twelve principles as a guide to the art of questioning. He suggested:

1. Do not ask only those pupils who hold up their hands. Ask all pupils. Be careful not to overlook those outside of your line of vision, in the right and left corners toward the front. Pick the pupils whom you want to answer. Do this after you have put the question to the entire class and after waiting just a moment to give everyone time to think.
2. If a correct answer is given, do not repeat the answer. Nor should you say, "Correct!" or use any other term of approval. Say nothing. Ask your next question. That is your approval.
3. If a wrong answer is given or no answer at all, do not ask another pupil. Do not say, "Next!" Your business is to help this pupil give the right answer. It is done by some easier intermediate questions that lead to the correct answer or by referring the pupil to certain parts in his book. Do not worry that you may be boring the other pupils. They will be very active mentally and will follow the whole procedure with keen interest. Nothing is lost; everything is gained. Once your pupils know that you may ask anyone and that you expect him to answer, your class will be much more alert.
4. Never make the pupil feel that you want to put him on the spot by asking him a question, or to use it as a sort of punishment (except when the object is really to

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 27-28.

wake him up, which should be rare). Ordinarily the pupil would feel that you are giving him an opportunity to participate and to contribute toward the discussion. Always deal charitably with him if he has difficulty in answering; help him. Do not rush him. This warning is sounded because questioning often takes on the form of punishment rather than a friendly discussion. That's why teachers . . . are so ready with their "Next!" accompanied perhaps by a look of reproach and a black mark in the book. Questions can, of course, be used as a punishment . . . , but this should not be the case in teaching a lesson.

5. Do not ask a question and shortly thereafter, when pupils are ready to answer, change your question, thus making it necessary for pupils to drop their first answer and formulate a new one. Think first--then ask.
6. Do not ask what the child evidently does not know, or cannot find, and then give the answer yourself.
7. Never be wordy. Do not talk so much between questions; say little or nothing. Let the question be long enough to be definite, but use no unnecessary verbiage.
8. Keep yes-and-no questions at a minimum. If used, follow them up by the question Why? where necessary.
9. Ask real questions
10. Never allow children to answer without being asked.
11. Insist that pupils stand up straight, a little away from the desk, when answering; or keep them seated.
12. Insist on clear, understandable speaking. If a child answers too softly, do not proceed. This, in time, will be sufficient to make him repeat his answer more clearly.¹⁰⁶

As will be seen shortly, considering Stellanor's emphasis on the question and answer approach, it should come as no surprise that he valued highly the catechetical method as a teaching approach, especially in religion.

As is also evident, if teaching as a process was primarily an exchange of thoughts between teacher and student, a certain classroom climate would need to be established. Stellanor shed light on his view of a proper instructional climate when he wrote that teaching

¹⁰⁶Ibid., pp. 29-30

. . . has always demanded and always will demand, concentration, and concentration has always required and always will require, interest, will-power, a sense of duty, the habit of quiet and orderly thinking, and the power to ignore interferences. It has always been an art to get children, as yet unaccustomed to a process of orderly thinking and by nature and early habit or training open to all distracting influences, to concentrate. By the same token, learning has always meant an effort.¹⁰⁷

One senses in the above quotation that in order for the "effort" of learning to be facilitated in an orderly and quiet fashion, the teacher in Stellanor's methodological scheme of things had to be a firm disciplinarian. He believed that "school discipline" was "the prime requisite for effective teaching" methods.¹⁰⁸ The need for firm classroom discipline stemmed from the larger societal problem of

. . . overstimulation. Mankind, and particularly America, has created for itself a very interesting and therefore stimulating world, full of unprecedented thrills and excitement on every hand and in all walks and conditions of life We are living in a whirlwind of attractions (distractions, if you will), activity, and excitement¹⁰⁹

It was not too surprising, according to Stellanor,

. . . that children should be overstimulated, fidgety, nervous, excited, talkative, boisterous, and unable to concentrate as they should They now have, hear, and see so many things that it is hard for them to get interested in more prosaic matters. It is often hard to get and hold their attention except by the

¹⁰⁷ Stellanor, "Message to the Teachers: School-Teaching Becoming More Difficult," p. 365.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

same attractive, exciting, and thrilling methods to which the world has accustomed them.¹¹⁰

Consequently, it behooved teachers to utilize methods "whereby his pupils become more quiet, settled, and sedate."¹¹¹ In order for this to be achieved, the teacher had to have control of the classroom. As Stelhorn viewed it:

Lack of proper control of the children is a lack of character, a lack of Christianity, a lack of proper standards, a lack of vision and judgment in spiritual matters; gross materialism, inability to appreciate moral and spiritual values, carnal-mindedness, disobedience to God, imaginary faith, ungodliness.¹¹²

The principal means of achieving control for the teacher was, according to Stelhorn, to apply restraint. Unfortunately, wrote Stelhorn,

Ours is an age that frowns upon restraint and repression in training, but wants it more than ever in life. In school and home, unhampered self-expression is the thing We are living the Freudian philosophy and reaping its bitter fruits.¹¹³

Stelhorn continued:

. . . everybody knows that wooden paddles will not be applied to young men and women, and so-called child experts say that they should not be applied at an earlier age

It is considered magnanimous, more civil, more in keeping with the discovery of psychologists, to let children do largely as they please, or rather to let

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 366.

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²August C. Stelhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 61 (February 1926): 31.

¹¹³August C. Stelhorn, "Restraint, Discipline, Manners," Lutheran School Journal 71 (March 1936): 321.

them grow up unhindered by old-fashioned restraint and discipline under the mere guidance of a considerate, indulgent teacher¹¹⁴

In a biting injunction, Stellsborn wrote:

. . . let no teacher . . . imagine that he is doing his charges a particular favor by lowering the bars of restraint. In the end the child will suffer the evil consequences in numerous ways. Restraint in youth from all that is contrary to the Word of God and to the laws of decency means restraint, proper conduct, and high character throughout life

For a Christian school . . . not to strive for the very heights of self-restraint, self-discipline, and proper behavior of children is to deny the ultimate aim of Christianity and must indeed be ascribed to a lack of enlightenment, a lack of spiritual insight and understanding.¹¹⁵

It would appear that, while Stellsborn did not itemize a group of methods for the teacher to use in achieving student restraint and discipline, he was not above the use of corporal punishment in the classroom. Sarcastically, he wrote:

. . . may neither modern custom nor "anticruelty" societies stay the guiding staff of . . . teachers in building up "sturdy personality and upstanding character" in our boys and girls!¹¹⁶

Even more specifically, Stellsborn once suggested to teachers that an excellent means of curing student temper tantrums was the application of "a lotion of unburned hickory ashes."¹¹⁷

Lest too bleak a picture of Stellsborn's

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵Ibid., pp. 321-322.

¹¹⁶August C. Stellsborn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 58 (August-September 1923): 274.

¹¹⁷August C. Stellsborn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 61 (September 1926): 351-352.

methodological perceptions be painted, it should be pointed out that he instructed teachers to "Devise a variety of activities, such as writing, drawing, paper-cutting, sand-table work, modeling, blackboard work, reading, looking at illustrated books or magazines . . ." ¹¹⁸ as methodological techniques. Of course, one must consider that Stellanhorn's audience usually performed its educational endeavors in a multigrade setting and that his "variety of activities" was probably more in the domain of expedient "busy work" than a recognition of merit in Progressive methodology. In other words, while a Lutheran teacher was working with one grade in a multigrade classroom. the children in the other grade(s) had to be kept "busy and profitably occupied when they . . . finished their assignments" ¹¹⁹

Regardless, the picture of Stellanhorn as a rigid, stiff, and aloof methodological theoretician is tempered somewhat by his view that

One of the most common errors into which a teacher may fall is to look upon his daily teaching as an effort to inculcate upon his pupils a maximum amount of the prescribed course of study in the most efficient manner and to make everything contributory to this objective. The danger of falling into this error is all the greater because the school is universally looked upon as a place where certain subjects are studied and because knowledge of these subjects is practically the only thing that counts in examinations, on report cards, in promotions, and in other methods of measuring and viewing the

¹¹⁸Stellanhorn, The Beginning Teacher, p. 33.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p 34.

pupils' or the teachers' work. Emphasis on teaching and learning subject-matter is therefore the most natural thing.¹²⁰

While subject matter emphasis may have been understandable, Stellhorn believed that it was imperative that the Lutheran school teacher look beyond it and always bear in mind the methodological consideration that he was not teaching purely subject matter, "but boys and girls."¹²¹ This consideration was to be especially important for Stellhorn in the teaching of religion.

To this juncture we have treated Stellhorn's conception of Lutheran school methodology in rather general terms. Which specific teaching methods did Stellhorn recommend for those subjects of the Lutheran elementary school religious and general education curriculum that he found time to comment upon? This chapter will conclude by examining Stellhorn's methodological conceptions for the following subjects: Catechism, memory work, Bible-reading, Bible history, reading, penmanship, history, geography, and music.

Before examining the methods recommended by Stellhorn to teach the subjects of the Lutheran school religion curriculum, one needs to explore his all-encompassing concerns regarding the methods of teaching

¹²⁰August C. Stellhorn, "Message to the Teachers: Habits," Lutheran School Journal 66 (May 1931): 417.

¹²¹Stellhorn, "Educational Objectives of a Lutheran School," p. 202.

religion. Stellhorn's historical hero-worship of Dr. C. F. W. Walther also is evident here. Stellhorn wrote that:

Walther knew the psychology and the principles of effective teaching He knew the . . . learner must be reached through his intellect, and the presentation must, therefore, be clear and comprehensible. Yet he also knew that knowledge and understanding in themselves are not education; they must strike the heart, arouse the emotions, and bring the will to a decision.¹²²

Consequently, religious instruction was, for Stellhorn, "a slow process" and he would not tolerate a teaching method that called for "cramming . . . the mind with a few unassimilated facts."¹²³ Rather, because all education was "soul service" (including, obviously, religious education), and because the soul manifested itself in threefold fashion--intellectually, emotionally, and volitionally, the methods employed to teach religion must be directed toward each of the soul's manifestations.¹²⁴ Stellhorn sensed that it was natural for the Lutheran teacher to over-emphasize the intellectual in his development and use of teaching methods in religion. To that end, he continually cautioned teachers to avoid intellectualism and the ensuing mechanical teaching of religion.

¹²² Stellhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 480.

¹²³ August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 60 (July 1925): 273.

¹²⁴ August C. Stellhorn, "Soul Service in School," unpublished essay delivered to the St. Louis Mixed Conference, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, April 17, 1936, Concordia Historical Institute, Stellhorn papers, p. 3a.

Stellhorn's negativism regarding intellectualism in the teaching of religion was grounded in his religious orientation. For Stellhorn it was

. . . not enough for the Christian to know and understand. In fact, mere intellectual grasp of Biblical or doctrinal truths is not yet Christianity. Faith and sanctification are indeed produced by Biblical knowledge, and only by such knowledge, but they lie in another field and may or may not be out of all proportion to the amount of knowledge. That is, a person may be a mental or intellectual giant, but spiritually a mere babe or even devoid of spiritual life.¹²⁵

Stellhorn's concern was that there was too much intellectualism in the methods of teaching religion in Lutheran schools and that

. . . an intellectual Christianity--a Christianity which knows and understands and remembers but does not believe in and live it, is not emotionally and volitionally benefited thereby nor affected in heart and will. A purely intellectual Christianity is minus faith and spiritual life and therefore dead; it is a sort of sanctified unbelief, which ends in sure damnation.

To be sure, Stellhorn did not mean that the "thousands of so-called inconsequential facts" learned from an intellectual method of teaching religion would "remain inconsequential or that they" would be "wholly useless even if they" remained "inconsequential."¹²⁷ "After all," wrote Stellhorn.

we are using the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit can,

¹²⁵August C. Stellhorn, "Intellectualism in Religion," Lutheran School Journal 78 (April 1943): 347.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 348.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*

in spite of us, through such Word of God work upon the heart and will of our pupils That is a consolation. But it is not a justification of a type of teaching . . . where the Holy Spirit must produce results in spite of it.¹²⁸

To the type of teaching that would produce this intellectualism in religion, Stellan Stellanhorn affixed the term "mechanical." For Stellanhorn, mechanical teaching was

. . . that teaching which, coldly and machinelike, inculcates facts and addresses itself only or chiefly to the intellect. Cold and machinelike teaching does not mean poor or uninteresting teaching; it may be highly expert, as a machine usually is. It does not mean lack of method or system. The mechanical teacher, however, is himself an intellectual, a machine without life and feeling or with very little of it, a dealer in facts, and his appeal to the learner is like that of a mechanical device, interesting and captivating perhaps, but lacking life and warmth.¹²⁹

As Stellanhorn further elaborated:

. . . facts may be interestingly discussed, but we are left cold and unmoved. Of course, no teaching . . . of the Word of God or of anything else leaves us entirely cold; all facts, no matter how mechanically or uninterestingly presented, may work on our heart and will; but the point is that the mechanical teacher . . . disappoints our soul so much in its emotional and volitional functions that we are directly prevented from reacting properly to the facts.¹³⁰

For Stellanhorn, "The point of criticism" in the mechanical teaching of religion was "the teaching of . . . bare fact without any appeal to the heart and will of the child."¹³¹

Stellanhorn believed that, if effective religious

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 348.

¹²⁹August C. Stellanhorn, "Mechanical Teaching of Religion," Lutheran School Journal 72 (February 1937): 244.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹Ibid., p. 245.

instruction was to be accomplished, a method would have to reach the heart and will of the student. As he viewed it, the critical methodological issue in the teaching of religion was "The transfer of knowledge into life" ¹³² How could a Lutheran teacher "bring about better results . . . in the spiritual field . . . ?" ¹³³ Simply put, what method should enable the teacher of religion to reach the child's heart?

Like so many that went before him and so many that came after him, Stellhorn did not supply a cogent methodological answer. In fact, he demurred, evidently because he believed that reaching the heart was not really a methodological consideration, but principally a matter of the teachers' attitude. As Stellhorn viewed it, in order to reach the emotional and volitional side of the pupil a fact had to be of consequence,

. . . especially of eternal consequence, to the . . . learner. When I am told and convinced that I have many times transgressed the First Commandment or, as is often the case, merely taught logically and systematically what this Commandment requires of me, my heart and conscience remain untouched unless or until I am impressed with the temporal and eternal consequences, namely, that by my transgressions I have aroused and deserved the wrath and punishment of the living God, proved myself wholly unworthy of His forgiving grace and love, endangered my very state of grace, and will be eternally lost unless God forgives me for the sake of

¹³²August C. Stellhorn, "Reaching the Heart," Lutheran School Journal 78 (May 1943): 392.

¹³³Ibid.

Jesus Christ.¹³⁴

In other words, unless a religious fact was of importance and consequence to the child, it would not strike his heart or conscience and, consequently, would leave him totally cold. It was the "business of the teacher . . . to present and emphasize" the consequences of God's Word in religious instruction, "or . . . make it important to the . . . learner, yes, make it a matter of life or death."¹³⁵ How was the teacher's attitude involved in all this? Stelhorn believed that in order to reach more than the child's intellect with the message of God's Word (that is, in order to reach his heart and conscience as well), the Lutheran teacher had to project an attitude that conveyed that God's Word was of consequence to him personally. In Stelhorn's words, it required that the

. . . teacher . . . first take the whole matter seriously himself; that he find and project as the main thing in a lesson . . . what is of real consequence [and] above all, that preparations be made prayerfully and with divine guidance and the teaching . . . be done with the prayer that the Lord may lend power and emphasis to what is said.¹³⁶

In his emphasis on the importance of having the teacher possess an attitude that sincerely reflected eternal consequences, Stelhorn cautioned that becoming sentimental and emotional in the process was forbidden. "They are a

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 394.

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Ibid.

sign of weakness. State, teach, impress, the consequential facts of the Word, and the hearts are most likely to respond, definite decisions and the change of attitude most likely to result."¹³⁷

Stellhorn illustrated how a teacher might employ his approach to teaching religious facts with a consequential attitude as follows:

In the Fifth Commandment we have the Bible-passage "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." The tendency is to touch this passage merely to prove that hate is murder and to overlook the entire last part of the passage, which would thoroughly arouse the heart and will. It is not enough that a child should know, realize, and admit that hatred is murder; for this may leave him entirely cold. The teacher must get closer. "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." A hater is a murderer; hence no hater has eternal life abiding in him. Hate is a horrible sin, like murder. But hate is very common. You and I, too, commit this sin. We cannot hope to be saved with hatred in our hearts. What are we to do about it? What if we continue indifferent toward this common sin?¹³⁸

As can be seen, Stellhorn's consequential emphasis was based in the Law. Also apparent is the fact that any further examination of Stellhorn's broad methodological concerns regarding intellectualism and the mechanical teaching of religion would be fruitless. While the quotation above enables one to sense how the teacher's consequential attitude might become methodologically operative, an attitude is so intangible that it defies precise definition.

¹³⁷Ibid.

¹³⁸Stellhorn, "Mechanical Teaching of Religion," p. 245.

It seems propitious then, to examine Stellsborn's specific methodological recommendations in those categories he chose to discuss.

Stellsborn believed that "Knowledge of the Catechism . . . is basic to our whole religious life and to salvation itself."¹³⁹ Consequently, he believed that the study of the Catechism was a subject of vital importance. While he acknowledged the existence of a number of methods for teaching the Catechism (e.g., lecture and question, statement and question, pure lecture method), it should come as no surprise that Stellsborn considered the catechetical method as the best. He wrote:

Skillfully handled, this method is unsurpassed for all ages of children. It consists in the main of a progressive, interesting, and sympathetic exchange of ideas in questions and answers between teacher and pupils, according to a carefully prepared plan, and in pursuit of a definite aim.¹⁴⁰

Beyond this, Stellsborn's conception of the catechetical method was the same as our previous discussion of his views on the general question-and-answer method. While the evidence does not speak concretely, it does seem to suggest (considering Stellsborn's consistent emphasis on it) that the question-and-answer or catechetical method was the pedagogical approach he favored most.

Stellsborn's writings also reflected a methodological

¹³⁹Stellsborn, "Monthly Message: Knowing, Liking and Living the Catechism," p. 81.

¹⁴⁰Stellsborn, Manual for Lutheran Saturday-Schools, p. 22.

conception in another aspect of the religious curriculum--memory work. He believed that giving proper memory work assignments went further than merely having the teacher make an assignment via page number and putting checkmarks in his grade book when the child had fulfilled his duty.¹⁴¹ Stellhorn wrote that

The language of the material to be memorized should be explained. But even this is not enough. Memorizing should be motivated, that is, a desire should be created in the pupil to memorize a given item. Whenever possible, he should be shown the rich content and value or the general beauty of such an item; he may also be told where and how such an item may be used in life or why it is of such importance to commit it to memory.¹⁴²

Stellhorn's pedagogical suggestions are certainly understandable, especially in light of his concern over mechanical teaching of religion. This concern carried over into his views on methods in teaching memory work. Busy Lutheran school teachers who were "too much concerned about covering a pensum and too little about the training of the child" quite naturally would often treat memory material too mechanically.¹⁴³

Stellhorn provided some practical methodological suggestions for teachers to use in teaching children to study for memory work. He commented:

The average child should be shown various ways of committing things to memory and advised as to when and

¹⁴¹Ibid., p. 35.

¹⁴²Ibid., pp. 35-36.

¹⁴³Ibid., p. 36.

how often to study.

The breaking up of the material into logical units . . . is one substantial help. Classes that failed on certain long passages have shown uniform perfection of recitation after the teacher had analyzed the passage into its various parts.

Let the instructor read such a passage to the class or diagram it on the board.¹⁴⁴

If the teacher would "Pay close attention to the pronunciation of consonants and the endings of words . . . ," and "watch the phrasing," Stellohorn believed the child could commit a passage to memory, but "he will not know it if he tries merely to repeat the string of words."¹⁴⁵

Stellohorn suggested another method as a possible option in teaching children to study their memory work. He believed that

It is profitable to assist the memory also by writing. Let the instructor try this at the blackboard (once the method is learned, children will do it automatically on paper):--

Let me be ____ ,
Thou faithful God ____ ;
Let me ____ never
Nor wander ____ Word.

With this at the board, the instructor, pointing at the words and dashes, says the stanza as it should be; children repeat. Should a dash cause trouble, insert the word. Have also individuals repeat. Then erase certain words, as, for example:--

Let ____ ,
Thou ____ ;
Let ____
Nor wander ____ .

Repeat the foregoing process. Erase the last line;

¹⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 36-37.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p. 37.

children recite. Erase the second-last line; children recite. And so on. If difficulties develop, insert the troublesome words again. Continue with the rest of the stanza. There will be very few children who do not know their stanza perfectly before the lesson is over. This need not be done every time; just often enough for the class to realize the helpfulness of it.¹⁴⁶

While Stellhorn's methodological suggestion was illustrated with a hymn verse, he also believed that the same technique could be utilized "with difficult Bible- or Catechism-passages."¹⁴⁷

In a similar vein, Stellhorn provided some methodological suggestions to teachers to facilitate student memorization of the Ten Commandments and Luther's explanation of each. One of the principal stumbling blocks to memorizing these, according to Stellhorn, was "that the child has never been taken over the commandments for the express purpose of distinguishing one explanation from the other."¹⁴⁸ Therefore, Stellhorn believed that

. . . a special exercise is important. Have children quickly run through all the explanations and recite only the beginning words after "We should fear and love God," like this:--

"that we may not curse, swear . . ."
 "that we may not despise preaching . . ."
 "that we may not despise our parents . . ."
 "that we may not hurt nor harm . . ."
 "that we may lead . . ." Etc.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

¹⁴⁷Ibid.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 38.

¹⁴⁹Ibid.

Just as with the previous teaching technique, this one, too, could be utilized not only with the Ten Commandments and their explanations, but "with the petitions [of the Lord's Prayer] and other parts of the Catechism."¹⁵⁰

A final methodological concern addressed by Stellhorn in writing about memory work was the oral recitation of a memory assignment. While individual memorizing in written form could be used, Stellhorn believed that "As a rule, the recitation should be oral, and each pupil should, if possible, recite the whole assignment"¹⁵¹ The written approach was to be used as a "change off" and could be employed by allowing "certain pupils [to] write their memory material while the rest recite."¹⁵² Stellhorn suggested the following principles be considered by teachers in their method of conducting the oral recitation:

Insist on good posture, proper demeanor, clear enunciation, rather slow and deliberate speaking, proper phrasing, proper emphasis, and, above all, on exact recitation.

Do not prompt pupils. Instead give them time to think. If this is not sufficient, give them a later opportunity to recite. Once pupils are used to this, they will learn their lessons more thoroughly and recite more exactly. Remember, an item is not memorized unless one can recite it without help. Always treat pupils kindly, especially those who stumble and hesitate in their recitation, but insist on exact recitation without

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

help.¹⁵³

If he was not definitive in his treatment on how to teach Catechism and memory work, Stellsborn was even less definitive in his treatment of proper methods for the balance of the religious education curriculum. When writing about Bible-reading, all Stellsborn could add to the aforementioned methods was that teachers should

. . . not talk too much. Do not go too deeply into exegesis. But, on the other hand, do not read anything without necessary explanations and applications. Open up the Scriptures for your little hearers; do it in simple, brief, and warm-hearted manner. Refrain from language or ideas that are beyond children. Let your Bible hour be a solemn, dignified hour, one that becomes the Word of God. Let the whole atmosphere be one of reverence.¹⁵⁴

Bible history was to be taught with the following "direct" and "effective" method in mind:

1. The instructor asks a few well-directed summary questions about the foregoing story and states the introduction, topic, (heading), and aim of the new story.
2. Then he tells the story in the Bible language, but with brief explanatory remarks where necessary and with natural applications leading to the achievement of his aim anywhere in the story, in the form of a remark or a question. The object is to present the story in as brief and clear a form as possible and to apply it.
3. He asks a few summary questions in a quick recall.
4. He retells the story, this time in pure Bible language, without explanations or applications. If the story is not too short, he tells it a second time in parts, in natural divisions, paragraphs perhaps.
5. After each paragraph or other division he questions the pupils on the contents, including the explanations and applications made in the first telling.
6. At the end he summarizes the main story facts and

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 42.

the chief applications.¹⁵⁵

One senses that the catechetical method formed a major part of Stellsborn's approach to teaching Bible history, also.

The same lack of methodological definitiveness is carried over into Stellsborn's procedural recommendations for general education subjects: reading, penmanship, history, geography, music. Again, these were the only general education subjects he chose to treat.

Stellsborn's promotional writing about his Bobbs-Merrill Readers stated that he was committed to "a combination of many methods" in the teaching of reading.¹⁵⁶ A closer examination of this written material sheds some light on what methods he opposed in teaching reading. For example, he wrote:

Time was when a reading-lesson was taught quite generally by the catechization method. Word for word, sentence for sentence, and paragraph for paragraph, the selection was gone over, a little at a time, as though the class were dealing with a divinely inspired text, in which every word counts, or as if there was no other way to learn to read. It was a process of acute analyzation, applied in season and out of season. We meant well, but our common experience was that the reading-lesson was a bore to both teachers and pupils. What we lacked was a larger aspect of reading and its objectives. We seemed to be principally concerned about getting the meaning of the selection and the correct pronunciation and defining of words.¹⁵⁷

However, a closer examination of these same materials belies

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 45.

¹⁵⁶ Stellsborn, "The Bobbs-Merrill Readers, Concordia Edition," Lutheran School Journal 62 (August 1927): 287.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 287-288.

Stellhorn's commitment to many methods in the teaching of reading. Essentially he was committed to two: word and thought recognition and phonic analysis. Neither of these were fully explained. In tracing methods used historically in reading instruction, Stellhorn found that

We have had various tendencies in the teaching of . . . reading. Years ago it was the spelling method. And let no one say that children did not learn to read by that method. They did

After the spelling method followed the pure phonic method, which was almost as unpedagogical as its forerunner. Phonics were followed by a strong tendency toward word, sentence, and even story method, i.e., making one or the other of these the unit with which to begin recognition of printed or written symbols, and working gradually down to word phonic analysis. But this method spent its energy in drilling words, sentences, and stories, and neglected the phonics.

Then the pendulum swung back to a proper combination of word and thought recognition and phonic analysis¹⁵⁸

Stellhorn believed that this "proper combination" of methods could be found in his Bobbs-Merrill Readers. This is evidenced when he wrote:

The Bobbs-Merrill series [Concordia Edition] weaves the phonic exercises in a natural way into the lesson material. [A]ctual reading, not word analysis, is the principal thing, and . . . word analysis, or phonic drill, [should be] developed as the child needs it. There is no lack of system in phonics. The child learns all the phonic elements in a thorough and systematic way as he goes along. But never are phonics made the better half of learning to read, but rather only the serviceable handmaiden.¹⁵⁹

Beyond this recommendation for methodological balance, Stellhorn provided little else that would be helpful in an

¹⁵⁸ Stellhorn, "The Bobbs-Merrill Readers, Concordia Edition," Lutheran School Journal 62 (July 1927): 250.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

examination of his conception of teaching methods in reading.

This same paucity hampers a careful examination of Stellsborn's views about teaching penmanship. One thing is certain, though; he was diametrically opposed to the "strict arm-movement" approach because

When beautiful letter production or any written production is the objective, the child should not be hampered by thoughts of how his hand is held. In that process, correct hand position should be a habit. The teacher who has given orders to the class to write should not constantly interrupt by correcting hand positions and as a result destroy the child's concentration on form. The constant fear that the hand might be held wrong will hinder his confidence and boldness so necessary in good writing.¹⁶⁰

Stellsborn, obviously, did "not agree that muscular movement" in penmanship was "the natural thing for small children or [that] it should be expected of them."¹⁶¹ For Stellsborn, "the best thing to do" was "to continue the splendid Palmer Method or similar methods, but to forget strict arm movement."¹⁶²

One can speculate that the method of teaching history in the Lutheran elementary school would probably be

¹⁶⁰ August C. Stellsborn, "Message to the Teachers: Care versus Fear in Productive Work," Lutheran School Journal 68 (May 1933): 414.

¹⁶¹ August C. Stellsborn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 62 (October 1927): 398.

¹⁶² August C. Stellsborn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 59 (February 1924): 68-69. The Palmer Method of teaching penmanship was first introduced in 1888. It stresses a script style, model letter forms, and a free-flowing muscular forearm movement.

centered upon the reading of a standard text coupled with a daily "catechization" on the assigned readings. Stellhorn wrote little about methods to be used in teaching this subject except that in the teaching of American history he was against the use of "disparaging remarks about American heroes or about the causes or objects of American wars" ¹⁶³ Evidently his hero-worship was not reserved for the Synodical fathers alone.

Stellhorn's one foray into the methodological fray involving the teaching of geography reflected the heavy influence of one of the best known curriculum theorists of the early Twentieth Century--Franklin Bobbitt. ¹⁶⁴ Remaining true to form, Stellhorn never provided a definitive statement of his methodological views about the teaching of geography in the Lutheran elementary school, but at least he provided a glimpse through some principles that were to guide the teacher in selecting methods. Stellhorn believed that geography "should be taught so vividly and

¹⁶³ August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 62 (November 1927): 432.

¹⁶⁴ Franklin Bobbitt, a professor at the University of Chicago, was probably one of the most influential curriculum theoreticians of the 1920's. His emphasis was on justifying each school subject on the basis of how directly useful it was to the daily life of students (e.g., in their activities at home, on the job, as citizens, and during their leisure time, etc.). Bobbitt identified what he deemed to be the principal activities of adult life and recommended a curriculum of subjects to be built around them. Essentially he believed that the school curriculum was the entire range of adult experiences. Evidently, Stellhorn's reading of Bobbitt's How to Make a Curriculum was an influential source for many of his ideas on geography as a school subject.

realistically that pupils feel for the time being as though they live in the countries studied."¹⁶⁵ He admonished teachers to allow

. . . the human element and interests [to] predominate in teaching place geography. Places of real importance and interest to the . . . student will impress themselves upon the memory automatically. Those of no importance or interest will be forgotten, though memorized and drilled.¹⁶⁶

He reminded geography teachers that:

As far as natural forces, land formations, climate, natural resources, the seasons, and the like are concerned, they will also be learned best as the stage, background, opportunity, or limitation of human action.¹⁶⁷

Stellhorn also stressed "the great need and value of" correlating geography "with other studies." He looked upon maps in geography teaching "more as a constant reference than as an object to be exhaustively committed to memory," the use of pictures as an aide in teaching geography, and the need for the study of geography to acquaint students "with graphs and weather maps."¹⁶⁸ Finally, for Stellhorn, the method of teaching geography should lead the pupil "to make certain generalizations or to recognize certain geographical principles, not by memorizing or repeating them

¹⁶⁵ Stellhorn, "The General Curriculum: Geography," p. 9.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 10.

from the book, but by recognizing them from concrete cases."¹⁶⁹

A final subject in which Stellhorn attempted to share some of his methodological wisdom with Lutheran teachers was music. When one considers the importance of music in his personal life, it is surprising that Stellhorn wrote so little of a methodological nature regarding the teaching of the subject. Once again, Stellhorn provided information as to what he was against in music methods. He

. . . hoped that every teacher in Synod [would] eventually turn from the accustomed drilling of melodies and part-songs by rote, from the often quite unpleasant, unnatural, or ugly rendition of songs by children¹⁷⁰

Rather, teachers were to apply themselves to a "better and richer program of beautiful singing, music-appreciation, and ready music-reading."¹⁷¹ Unfortunately, existing evidence indicates that Stellhorn did not provide a method for teaching music-reading. Two devices useful for teaching music appreciation were, according to Stellhorn, the radio and the phonograph. He believed that the Lutheran school teacher would find symphony radio concerts "very beneficial" for a course in music appreciation.¹⁷² The use of the phonograph in the teaching of music appreciation, and, one

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Stellhorn, "Message to the Teachers: Various Reports," p. 321.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 63 (October 1928): 392.

may suspect in other aspects of the music curriculum as well, was also helpful because, as Stellsborn viewed it,

The phonograph is a powerful educator It must be remembered that the motive and character of author, composer, and producer of a selection is carried over by the phonograph to the listener.¹⁷³

Stellsborn also provided a perspective on the proper methods to be used in teaching singing. The singing period could "begin with a review of melodies learned in preceding lessons" followed by a discussion of the new song the class was to be taught."¹⁷⁴ Next came a discussion of the text. This was followed by the teacher singing or playing "the new melody several times while the pupils follow the text in the hymn-book" with an emphasis on the "correct time."¹⁷⁵ After this the teacher was to "sing or play the first phrases and let the pupils repeat. Then sing the second phrase, and so on."¹⁷⁶ The teacher's method was also to stress children singing "rather softly and naturally" avoiding "all harsh

¹⁷³ Stellsborn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 60 (April 1925): 157.

¹⁷⁴ Stellsborn, Manual for Lutheran Saturday-Schools, p. 51.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. In spite of Stellsborn's admonition to teachers to "turn from the drilling of melodies," all his recommendations for the teaching of singing sound very much like an advocacy of a rote method. This may be explained by the fact that the methodological insights that he shared regarding the teaching of singing were provided in a book that treated Lutheran Saturday schools and other part-time agencies of the congregation, all with limited contact with students. In this setting the rote approach was perhaps expedient.

tones and shouting."¹⁷⁷ "Above all," wrote Stellhorn,

. . . train your pupils to sing with their hearts as well as with their lips; ever and again lead them into the meaning and mood of the text and show them that in most cases the songs which they learn are directed to God Himself and that in all cases they are sung for His glory and are heard by Him.¹⁷⁸

One again senses Stellhorn's strong religious conviction permeating his methodological perspective.

In sum, Stellhorn was neither systematic nor definitive in his curricular and methodological views. It would appear that his Missouri Synod religious orthodoxy was translated into a rather conservative conception of the Lutheran school's curriculum and educational methodology. Surprisingly, this mold of conservatism was not altogether carried over into Stellhorn's conception of the Lutheran teacher in ministry. It is this conception that will be addressed in the next chapter of this study.

¹⁷⁷Ibid.

¹⁷⁸Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

STELLHORN'S CONCEPTION OF THE LUTHERAN TEACHER IN MINISTRY

Although Stellsborn's conception of curriculum and methodology may have been limited on theoretical grounds, his views on the Lutheran teacher as a minister of the Church are among his most impressive educational statements. Not only was he cogent on the subject, but, as Stephan A. Schmidt points out in Powerless Pedagogues, Stellsborn was the "most vocal--and certainly the most militant--teacher" in the Missouri Synod and believes that "If ever there was a teacher power movement in Missouri, it was in motion with Stellsborn's leadership."¹ Schmidt's

¹ Stephan A. Schmidt, Powerless Pedagogues: An Interpretive Essay on the History of the Lutheran Teacher in the Missouri Synod, Twenty-Fifth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association (River Forest, Illinois: Lutheran Education Association, 1972), p. 87. As the title indicates, the emphasis of the book is on the plight of Lutheran teachers, both male and female, as they work in a church system dominated by the preaching clergy.

One of the items about which Schmidt writes is the matter of franchise. He makes a major point of the fact that from the inception of the Missouri Synod, the Lutheran teacher has not had a vote in decisions made on either the district or the Synodical level.

Schmidt also demonstrates that the clergy has held a dominant role in The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod from the very beginning. They not only held over fifty percent of the vote (e.g., at both district and Synodical conventions, each member congregation receives two votes; one for the pastor and one for a lay member with teachers possessing only "advisory" status) but also dominated in other ways. Early professors were all members of the clergy

positive attitude (in what tends to be a rather negative book) toward Stellhorn appears to stem from Stellhorn's attempts to move Lutheran teachers "into a new realization of dignity" as he wrote about the Lutheran teacher in ministry.²

Stellhorn's study of Lutheran educational history taught him that the question of the Lutheran teacher's ministerial status "for many years was not satisfactorily answered."³ He recognized that the Synodical fathers had expressed "varying and in part contradictory views."⁴ Perhaps, then, Stellhorn's greatest contribution to The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, next to his promotion of parochial schools, is to be found in his writings about the Lutheran teacher as a minister.

To understand Stellhorn's concept of the Lutheran teacher in ministry, one needs to review his conception of

 during the first fifty years of the Synod's history. Until very recently the president of each Synodical college was a member of the clergy. Only members of the clergy can hold certain elective offices in the Synod and teachers have remained in the minority on most of the boards and commissions of the Synod even though they outnumber the clergy. Through a careful process, teachers were taught their proper place in the public ministry, that of being subservient to the pastor. According to Schmidt, all these elements have contributed to the fact that, as a profession, the Lutheran teaching ministry has been and remains a powerless ministry.

²Ibid.

³August C. Stellhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), p. 218.

⁴Ibid.

the Church. As was pointed out in Chapter II, Stelhorn's orthodox Missouri Synod outlook viewed the Church as a body that incorporates many persons who by faith have entered into a close and intimate relationship with Christ. This includes all those who historically came to faith, who presently are in the faith, and who in the future will come to faith in Christ as their personal Savior and Lord (e.g., the invisible Church). In addition, Stelhorn's Missouri Synod orientation also held to the idea of the visible Church, or all those who at least outwardly profess the faith. He believed the invisible Church to be hidden in the visible Church.

The pivotal idea in Stelhorn's concept of the Church, as it relates to this chapter, was his view of the purpose of the Church. As was previously stated, Stelhorn believed that the single, most important mission of the Church was to teach and preach the Word of God for purposes of converting, strengthening, preserving, and saving souls. Indeed, from Stelhorn's religious perspective, this was the ministry or service that the Church was to render. The ministry of the Church was to be accomplished by the public (in behalf of all) teaching and preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. Stelhorn made no distinction between the general public ministry of the Christian Church and the ministry of the congregation in essence and purpose. As he put it: "The Lord did not institute two ministries--one for the congregation and one

for the Church as a whole--but just the one general ministry of the Christian Church."⁵ For Stelhörn, the preaching and teaching of God's Word and the administration of the Sacraments was "'the one divinely instituted office' or ministry" and was given "to all true disciples of Christ, to all true believers, regardless of age or sex--not to an organization, not to a class of Christians, such as only the men, only the adults, only the clergy."⁶

Consistent with Missouri Synod orthodoxy, Stelhörn recognized the practical need for fulfilling the Church's public ministry. Because the Church's ministry was performed in behalf of all, "it requires the election of any number of fellow Christians to carry out this ministry in behalf of all."⁷ To Stelhörn's way of thinking, when the members of a congregation elected an individual to carry out its ministry, they did so because they could not do it all by themselves. Consequently, an individual was elected (or

⁵August C. Stelhörn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," unpublished essay in the files of the Board for Parish Education of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, St. Louis, Missouri, n.d., p. 2.

⁶Ibid., p. 3. Insofar as baptism brings one into the priesthood of all believers (e.g., the common ministry), infants would be included. In Stelhörn, there is no discussion regarding infants in the common ministry. He is here focusing solely on the public ministry.

⁷August C. Stelhörn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," unpublished essay delivered to the Western District Teachers Conference, Lutheran High School, St. Louis, Missouri, November 5, 1952, Concordia Historical Institute, Stelhörn papers, p. 4.

called) "through the voters assembly, to do it in their behalf. That is what we call a public ministry."⁸

Unfortunately, according to Stellhorn, it was "common in . . . Synod, and perhaps generally, to refer only to pastors as ministers and to their offices as the 'holy ministry.'"⁹ Stellhorn was quick to point out that

There is no such thing as "only one divinely-instituted Church position," as we have commonly claimed for the present-day pastorate. On the contrary, if the positions in the early Christian Church may be said to be divinely instituted, then Scripture teaches that God instituted a number of offices or church positions none of which can be proved to exist in its original form today.¹⁰

More specifically, Stellhorn believed that there were "three erroneous conceptions of the pastorate: 1. That only the pastorate is the holy ministry. 2. That only the pastorate is divinely instituted. 3. That all other offices of the congregation or Church are branches of the pastorate."¹¹ Reacting first to the concept that the holy ministry was embodied only in the pastorate, Stellhorn commented that

. . . a pastor is a minister, he is in the holy ministry, but so are all teachers, professors, and other called servants of the Church. The public ministry . . . is an office of the Church, and when the

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 3.

¹¹Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 5.

Church elects anyone to perform this ministry, or any part of it, that person is a minister of the Church and of God, and is in the holy ministry.¹²

More emphatically, he believed that it was "wrong to confuse the public ministry with the pastor's office in the sense that only his office is a public ministerial office."¹³

Many who held the pastorate as the only holy ministry argued in support of this conception that the pastorate was the only divinely instituted office. Stellhorn put to good use his knowledge of Church and Biblical history in responding to this view. He believed that there were many and varied offices in the Church, and all led to carrying out the Church's ministry. As a precedent, Stellhorn reminded the Missouri Synod that in the early Christian Church there were a "multiplicity and variety of church offices" that carried out the mission of the Church.¹⁴ According to Stellhorn, the New Testament revealed "a diversity of gifts and church positions."¹⁵ To support this contention, he cited John the Baptist as an example wherein Christ, "to multiply Himself, as it were, . . . sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 3.

Him" ¹⁶ Also used as an example of a divinely instituted, though temporary, office was the fact that on two different occasions Christ "sent out seventy disciples to preach, teach, and perform miracles." ¹⁷ Stellhorn went on to discuss the fact that Christ, in order "to perpetuate and extend His ministry in the immediate future, after His ascension, . . . prepared and sent out His apostles, and also gave the Church a great 'diversity of gifts.'" ¹⁸ These gifts, of course, are named in Ephesians 4:11 ("And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers") and in 1 Corinthians 12 (wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, working of miracles, prophecy, etc.). Stellhorn pointed out that the "apostolate and the special gifts of the Spirit were discontinued, and so were all the early church offices which the Lord

¹⁶ Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 6.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

established directly or through His Church."¹⁹ Again, Stelhorn's point here was that there was no such thing as just one divinely instituted church office (e.g., the pastorate).

Stelhorn was quick to point out that while the apostolate and special gifts were discontinued, "the ministry or office of the Church" was not.²⁰ As he viewed it, the "offices . . . established since, were indeed offices established by the Lord, but indirectly through the Church."²¹ It was his belief that this indirect establishment of ministerial offices, "already began in apostolic times, when, outside of the apostolate, the Lord gave a variety of servants, whose offices were established by the apostles and the Church."²² As for example, "Not only did some 120 brethren elect a substitute for Judas Iscariot, but the multitude in Jerusalem also elected and ordained seven deacons; and most local churches evidently established the office of elder, by recommendation of the apostles."²³ The fundamental truth to all of this was that it made no difference whether the Lord established an office directly or through His Church, "it was in every case the

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

Lord who established the office, and the office was a divine institution."²⁴ It made no difference whether Christ

. . . chose the incumbent directly or through His Church, according to His will, it was in every case the Lord who gave or placed the gift, and the person so given or placed was a public minister of God and of His Church. And precisely so it has always been, and so it is today.²⁵

As alluded to earlier, Stelhorn believed that Christ did not institute any permanent church positions or offices. This was true even of the pastorate as we know it today. This being the case, from Stelhorn's perspective it followed

. . . that all our church positions or offices, including the pastorate, have been through all the centuries since the time of the early Christian Church, and are today, established as to scope and form in Christian liberty, as needed or found useful to perform the divinely instituted office of the public ministry.²⁶

In other words, Stelhorn believed that the offices of the ministry in the contemporary Church were divinely established, but by the Church of God and according to needs. As he further elaborated:

The needs increase with the growth of the Church, whether that be a local congregation or the Church in general We have offices in larger congregations today which they did not need when they were small, when a single public servant, a pastor, with some help from members, could carry out the entire ministerial work, including the teaching of school. Because our Synod has

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Stelhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 4.

grown to such proportions, we have many offices today that the fathers a hundred years ago did not need.²⁷

The third erroneous conception of the pastorate, according to Stellsborn, was that all other offices of the congregation or Church were merely branches of the pastor's office. Implicit in this view (still held by many clergy in the Missouri Synod today) is a perspective of the pastor as commander-in-chief with all others around him being delegated various ministerial functions to perform in an auxiliary manner. Stellsborn recognized that the problem with this viewpoint was again in equating ministry with the pastorate rather than with the mission of the Church. Using the illustration of a tree and putting the branch concept into what he believed to be a proper perspective, Stellsborn addressed this viewpoint when he wrote:

Whatever the offices established by a Christian congregation or the Christian Church in the name of the Lord, to carry out the divinely-instituted and permanent office of the Church, they are parts or branches of that one office of the Church, and therefore offices of God, instituted by the Lord through his Church. If the trunk and roots of a tree are oak, then also the branches, twigs, and leaves are oak; if the body is human, then all its members are human.²⁸

In other words, it was incorrect to view a Lutheran teacher's office (or any other Church office) as a branch of the pastorate; rather all Church offices were to be considered branches of the Church's ministry--the preaching

²⁷Stellsborn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 7.

²⁸Ibid.

and teaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments.

To those that considered the parochial school teacher's office to be an auxiliary office to the holy ministry, Stellhorn pointedly commented that the "Bible knows nothing of auxiliary offices to some other office" ²⁹ While Holy Writ was silent on auxiliary offices, it did recognize that there were differences in church offices and Stellhorn would not dispute it. His knowledge of Scripture clearly manifested this: "When the office of deacons was created, the apostles, who at first had attended to everything, including the 'daily ministration' of bodily needs, said: 'It is not reason[able] that we should leave the Word of God, and serve tables.' Acts 6:2." ³⁰ However, Stellhorn also felt that it was noteworthy that while the office of deacon

. . . was to set the apostles free to give themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word" Scripture does not refer to it as an auxiliary office of the apostolate, though it was a real help to them. Rather, it was a function of the public ministry first performed by the apostles, and now given over to other church servants. ³¹

What Stellhorn was apparently saying was that there is a difference between ministerial offices, but the difference has nothing to do with the degree of divinity of the office

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

nor the nature of its institutions, but only in the kind of service rendered.

What also rankled Stellsborn about the concept of all other offices of the church being branches of the pastorate was a ranking of offices that flowed from this idea. As he put it, "Scripture undertakes no ranking, and never speaks of a higher or a lower office."³² Yet, influenced by his orthodox Missouri Synod theology, he realized that

The reason given by the apostles for the election of deacons indicates that the ministry of the Church embraces higher as well as lesser functions. Luther and the Confessional writings speak of these functions as higher and lesser "offices," not meaning higher or lesser church position in this case. The highest function, they say, is the teaching and preaching of the Word; lesser functions are baptizing, distributing communion, and everything else outside of the teaching and preaching of the Word.³³

Using this criterion, quite obviously, the pastorate embraces the highest function (e.g., teaching and preaching God's Word), as the first among other lesser functions. Because of this, Stellsborn believed,

. . . the mistake has been commonly made of confusing function with position, and calling the pastor's office the highest office of the Church, at the same time denying it regarding the teacher's office, the first and primary function of which is also to teach and preach the Word, not always to children only . . . , but quite commonly also to adults.³⁴

³²Stellsborn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 5.

³³Stellsborn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 7.

³⁴Ibid., p. 8.

To Stellhorn's way of thinking, the fact was that "both offices have the highest function of the ministry, and both have also . . . 'lesser offices'" (e.g., baptizing, distributing communion, playing the church organ, directing choirs, etc.).³⁵ Displaying a bit of rank-consciousness himself, Stellhorn wrote:

. . . all offices of the Church that have to do with the building and caring for the Church in the name of God, which is done only by means of applying the Word of God, have the highest function of the ministry. But no doubt everybody is agreed that those whose primary business is the direct feeding of the sheep and lambs of Christ, not only pastors and teachers, but also professors or teachers of the Word, have the most important offices in the Church.³⁶

Before one takes a specific look at Stellhorn's concept of the position of the Lutheran teacher, one needs to understand his definition of a public minister of the Church. In Stellhorn's theological scheme of things, a public minister of the Church was "anyone who has been chosen by his fellow Christians to perform any part of their ministry in their behalf."³⁷ He conceived of a public minister in both a broad and a narrow sense. In the wider sense, Stellhorn believed a public minister of the Church could include all those who did not work directly in the Word and doctrine (e.g., officers and board members, church secretaries, custodian, etc.). Obviously, in the stricter

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

sense, Stelhörn conceived of a public minister of the Church as "only those who hold a standing position in the Church, and in one way or another labor directly in the Word and doctrine."³⁸

While it was unimportant to Stelhörn what a public minister of the Church was called (e.g., pastor, teacher, professor, president of the Synod, etc.) because all were a species of the term "minister," it was essential that a public minister of the Church possess a call.³⁹ Stelhörn believed that it "is God who calls people into the special service of His Church."⁴⁰ As he perused the Old and New Testament, Stelhörn concluded that originally God called "directly by appointing the prophets and apostles" and that after Christ's ascension, "to this day, He has done it through His Church."⁴¹ His orthodox Missouri Synod position saw as the essentials of a call "That the church, in the name and by the command of God, asks one of its members, man or woman, to perform a part of its public ministry of the Word and doctrine in its behalf, whether that be for an indefinite period, a specified period, or even a single

³⁸ Ibid., p. 9.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ August C. Stelhörn, "An Evaluation of Our Procedure in Assigning Calls," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly 29 (Winter 1957): 162.

⁴¹ Ibid.

occasion."⁴² But, as Stelhorn pointed out, "The essence of the call is not a written or printed document, but the decision of the church, or local congregation, which the document reports in an orderly and dignified fashion."⁴³ The decision could take the form of a post card, a letter, a telegram, or a telephone call and it would still be a valid call because it was the church or congregational decision (election or choice) that counted, not the formality (e.g., a written document, installation, ordination, etc.) that went with it. Simply, within Stelhorn's religious framework, the call was essential "because no individual Christian has the right to work in behalf or in the name of his fellow Christians without authority from them."⁴⁴

With a valid call in hand, the Lutheran teacher was, to Stelhorn's way of thinking, a public minister of the Church. As he put it, "all the earmarks of" the teacher's "office and call, his special training, and everything else that goes with his service and standing in the Church, proves him to be a minister of the Gospel, although he is not a called pastor."⁴⁵

In examining the Scriptural basis for the position

⁴²Ibid., p. 167.

⁴³Stelhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church, p. 354.

⁴⁴Stelhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 9.

⁴⁵Ibid.

of the Lutheran teacher, Stellsborn found that it, like the pastorate, was not defined in the Bible. Rather, the essentials of the teacher's office, like the pastor's, could be found in the office Christ instituted when he commanded a public ministry (e.g., the preaching and teaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments). Stellsborn strongly believed that the Lutheran teacher has a part of what Luther and the Confessional writings call "the highest office of Christianity" or the teaching and preaching of God's Word. In Stellsborn's words, the teacher

. . . is given part of the congregation's public ministry, and is a true minister or servant of the Word. To speak in the language of the New Testament, his is also, like the pastor, a "bishop", "elder", "shepherd", "overseer", "ruler" (by the power of the Word), "apostle", "angel", "prophet", "evangelist", "pastor", and "teacher." This is to be understood in the sense in which a teacher participates in the properties or functions of the Biblical church servants named.⁴⁶

Consequently, even though the teacher's position is not defined in Scripture, Stellsborn's examination of Holy Writ led him to the conclusion that the teacher's position, like the pastorate,

. . . is divinely instituted, by virtue of the divine institution of the office of the public ministry of which his office is a part, just like the other church positions His office is not a man-made affair, although created by Christians as to its scope and functions.⁴⁷

Using C. F. W. Walther's words, Stellsborn adamantly

⁴⁶ Stellsborn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 9.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

proclaimed that the "teacher, therefore, has . . . 'a holy, divine office, a branch of the office which Christ instituted.'"⁴⁸

In attempting to define the teacher's office within the public ministry of the Church, Stellhorn cautiously pointed out that, as he understood it, "the teacher's office is not the pastorate of a congregation, or any duplication of it."⁴⁹ Rather, the teacher's primary task was the "performance of the public ministry among the children, by teaching a parochial school and by activity in or through other agencies of Christian training for children."⁵⁰ In addition, Stellhorn assigned some additional tasks that a Lutheran teacher could perform. These included such lesser ministerial functions as youth work, being an organist, serving as a choir director, and a host of other activities as would be defined in the teacher's call.⁵¹ But, as Stellhorn pointed out

The call . . . defines the scope and nature of the position ordinarily only in broad outline, and leaves sufficient flexibility for additions or deductions in the matter of details. Like that of the pastor, the teacher's position is not indivisible or unalterable. If important changes are made by the congregation, the law of love and common justice demands that such changes

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 9-10.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 10.

are made by mutual agreement.⁵²

As Stellsborn attempted to define the ministerial position of the Lutheran parochial school teacher, he made it very clear that "what the teacher has been called to do, is in all its phases a part of the congregation's or the Church's public ministry, even the Christian training in the common school branches."⁵³ Unfortunately, this posture had caused previous problems within the Missouri Synod, for many could justify the ministerial status of the Lutheran school teacher when he taught the Word of God, but could not rationalize the teaching of common branch subjects within a ministerial context. What resulted was an argument that said that the teacher had a dual office--divine when he taught the Word of God, secular or civic when he taught the common school branches. This twofold rationalization was necessary because it was felt that the Church had only the duty to preach and teach God's Word and not to provide for a Christian general education. Chapter IV has indicated how Stellsborn justified the provision of a general education as one of his purposes for a Christian education. In the present context, Stellsborn again came to the aid of the Missouri Synod teacher and offered what he believed to be a simple answer. Stellsborn wrote:

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Stellsborn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 9.

If the teaching of the common school branches is not part of the congregation's or Church's ministry, how dare a congregation call a teacher in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost "to accord them (the children) also a thorough Christian education in the common school branches of learning, according to a course of study adopted or approved by the congregation?"⁵⁴

These words, taken from the Lutheran teacher's Diploma of Vocation (call document), presented an inconsistency to Stellhorn. How could one argue for a dual office--divine and secular--when the teacher was called in God's name for both? Also perplexing to Stellhorn, were not only those that argued for the dual office of the Lutheran teacher, but who also could argue for the authority of a congregation to adopt or approve the course of common branch study. Of course, Stellhorn had the answer. He wrote:

The authority lies in the command of the Lord to His Church to teach and preach the Word, where He does not stipulate every detail needed to do this. There is practically nothing in the common branches of learning which is not needed for either the teaching and preaching or the learning and hearing, or in the study and use, of the Word.⁵⁵

Obviously, Stellhorn answered two questions here. If there was nothing in the secular (common) branches of learning that would not be needed for the preaching and teaching of God's Word, then the teacher really did not have a twofold call (e.g., divine when teaching God's Word and secular when teaching the common branches), but rather one single divine call from God because a teacher's work with the common

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 10.

⁵⁵Ibid.

branches was needed in performing his preaching function. Consequently, it was a unified, divine call and not one that was partially divine and partially secular.

Stellhorn sensed that the Lutheran teacher seemed "to assume a more subordinate position in" the Missouri Synod than was "good for the calling or the cause."⁵⁶ As he viewed it, the Lutheran teacher appeared "to be suffering from a sort of inferiority complex."⁵⁷ Therefore, Stellhorn chided teachers into growth, urging that they speak and act openly in the Synod's political arena. It was as if he thought that the blame for the teachers' poor self-esteem lay within the profession itself and not in the arguments over the teachers' status as a public minister. It also appeared that he believed that any hope for change in the teachers' status would have to come from within the profession itself.

To that end, Stellhorn attempted to dignify the Lutheran teacher's position. He pointed out that from its inception the Missouri Synod had "held the teacher's position in higher esteem than any other Lutheran body in America."⁵⁸ He supported this historical assertion by citing the following:

⁵⁶August C. Stellhorn, "A Lutheran Teacher's Responsibility," Concordia Historical Institute, Stellhorn papers, p. 10.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 11.

⁵⁸Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 12.

1.) The first diploma of vocation ever issued by the founding fathers went to a teacher (Carl Ludwig Geyer, 1840), before his own pastor . . . was voted such a call.

2.) Teachers at first received the same training as pastors, and have always been counted among the clergy.

3.) When Synod was organized, the teachers were classed with professors and all others who held no pastorates, or whose congregations had not yet joined Synod, as advisory members, and were expected to attend all synodical sessions.

4.) The teachers were given a formal written call, and the procedure in calling a teacher or dismissing him, was made the same as in calling or dismissing pastors.

5.) Teachers were also formally installed, and for all practical purpose "ordained" or set apart for a life of service as ministers of the Church.⁵⁹

It is this last citation of Stelhorn's that is so interesting. To this day in the Missouri Synod there is a debate over the "ordination" of pastors and the "installation" of teachers.⁶⁰ While both are adiaphora (that which God neither forbids or commands) in orthodox Missouri Synod practice, many seem to think that ordination is a rite reserved for the pastorate, again, implying that the pastorate is the only divinely instituted office. Stelhorn recognized this and reminded teachers that

. . . installation and ordination are adiaphora, not a divine institution, and may be omitted, without affecting the authority and responsibility conferred upon a servant of the Church by the CALL: . . . installation and ordination are but a solemn, public confirmation of the CALL and a matter of

⁵⁹
ibid.

⁶⁰ According to traditional Missouri Synod orthodoxy, ordination (for pastors) and installation (for teachers) are considered to be apostolic and ecclesiastical rites that solemnly attest and publically ratify that which is factually effected by the acceptance of a call.

good church order⁶¹

Then, both dignifying the teacher's position and equating it with the pastorate, Stellhorn wrote: "the only decisive factor which makes a Christian a public minister of the Church is the Call, . . . --the essence of the call being the decision of the congregation."⁶² In other words, it made no difference whether one was ordained or installed because it was the divine call that was the great equalizer.

Stellhorn's equating of a teacher's installation with the rite of ordination was surprising enough considering the many clergymen he might have offended, but even more surprising was his comment that it "would not be wrong to ordain . . . male teachers."⁶³ Unfortunately, Stellhorn quickly demurred by indicating that he was neither suggesting or requesting ordination of male teachers--evidently because he believed that the "Church has a perfect right to restrict formal ordination to its pastors"⁶⁴ One might also speculate that Stellhorn's less than adamant stance here was mitigated more by the practical expediency of keeping school support in

⁶¹August C. Stellhorn, "The Status of the Teacher: As Involved in the Eggen Case and in the Pending Amendment to the Social Security Act," Board for Parish Education Bulletin (June 1950): 4.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 12.

⁶⁴Ibid.

Synod than by the Church's rights.

Regardless, Stelhorn believed that when all was said and done, there were "principally two persons who" could "establish and uphold or harm and destroy, the dignity of the teacher's office"--the teacher himself and the pastor.⁶⁵ He admonished the Lutheran teacher "not to seek his station in academic standing, which in itself is good, but rather in the type of service he renders, especially as a minister of religion, and in a high Christian character."⁶⁶ Generally, Stelhorn instructed the teachers, "Let us try to be manly, sure of ourselves, and wise, and do everything that will enhance the teacher's standing."⁶⁷ The principal thing for pastors to remember was not

. . . [to] despise or minimize the importance of the teacher's calling, or to allow others to do it, for the selfish purpose of magnifying his own importance or financial advantage, but rather magnify the teacher's position, and not only let the teacher live justly with him, but regard him his best friend, brother and co-worker.⁶⁸

Certainly, in a climate like this a teacher's self-esteem was bound to improve.

Stelhorn shed additional light on his conception of the Lutheran teacher in ministry when he examined the

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Stelhorn, "A Lutheran Teacher's Responsibility," p. 11.

⁶⁸Stelhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," pp. 12-13.

relationship between the office of the pastor and the office of the teacher. He recognized that the two offices were not identical because "they have been arranged by the Church not to duplicate but to supplement each other, and to carry out different parts of the congregation's or the Church's public ministry."⁶⁹ Consistent with this, Stellhorn defined the scope and responsibility of each office. As he viewed it, the pastorate embraced "the entire congregation in its pastoral responsibility and functions, including the children and other members over which the teacher has charge, including also the teacher and his family."⁷⁰ But Stellhorn was most emphatic in pointing out that, while the pastor possessed this all-encompassing responsibility and care as a servant of the congregation, he was "not an independent Lord, who may do as he pleases, and who makes all decisions, or pressures others to make them"⁷¹ Rather, the pastor was limited "to the power and rule of the Word of God, and to the means and procedures of an evangelical shepherd."⁷² More specifically, Stellhorn believed that it was not Biblical

. . . to say that a congregation must turn its

⁶⁹Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 11.

⁷⁰Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 13.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid.

entire public ministry over to one man, a pastor, and then split it up into branches of the pastorate. Scripture knows of no such arrangement; nor does it know anything about a "head" of a congregation, or even about a primus inter paris (the first among others).⁷³

In a biting injunction apparently leveled at clerical arrogance, Stellhorn fumed:

. . . servants of the Church are inclined to forget sometimes that we are servants, not rulers; inferiors, not superiors; fellow-Christians of our church members, not in a class by ourselves; that we hold a position in the Church only by the grace of God and the trusting request of our fellow-believers, who want us to serve them. We should, therefore, in a particular sense and with double keenness remain aware of the Word of God spoken even to the lords and masters who have legal power: "Know that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him." Eph. 6:9. The temptation to rule occurs, of course, in matters on which Scripture is silent, or possibly where Scripture is misinterpreted.⁷⁴

Rather, the correct and Biblical concept in Stellhorn's scheme of things was that the

. . . Christian congregation is the Church, it has the Church's ministry to perform, and it must create one or more offices to do this. If one public servant suffices, well and good, just so the whole congregational ministry is properly carried out, including the Christian education of the children. This one man then has charge alone of carrying out the congregation's ministry. But he is a minister, a servant, a shepherd and overseer of the flock, not the head or boss of the congregation. No church servant is a boss or head A minister has no legal power. He has the greater power of the Word of God, and that power must be obeyed. His authority from God and the

⁷³Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 11.

⁷⁴Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 13.

Church is stipulated in his call.⁷⁵

As can be seen, Stellhorn put limitations upon the power of the pastorate and stressed instead an equating of ministry with the idea of service.

The theme of service is carried through in Stellhorn's definition of the teaching office. As he viewed it,

When a congregation needs more than one public servant, it could call a second or third pastor, but it usually creates the office of a parochial school teacher, assigns to that office authority and duties formerly assigned to the pastor, adds certain duties and calls one or more persons to carry out this office.⁷⁶

The creation of the office of the teacher, as Stellhorn viewed it, relieved the pastor of certain duties that had formerly been assigned to him. The ministry of the congregation was now "divided into a pastor's and a teacher's office or offices" with the teacher serving as an aid to the pastor and, conversely, the pastor serving as an aid to the teacher.⁷⁷ However, as Stellhorn pointed out, the purpose was not necessarily to aid one another, "but that the ministry of the congregation be carried out more fully and more adequately."⁷⁸ In his definition of the teaching office, Stellhorn was careful to point out that the

⁷⁵ Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 11.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 12.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

"teacher's office is not another pastorate" because its scope did "not extend over the entire congregation, so far as its functions are concerned."⁷⁹ Yet, the teacher's office was "an office of the entire congregation," serving the entire congregation, and, consequently, shares "with the pastor a degree of responsibility for the entire congregation."⁸⁰ From Stellhorn's perspective, the teacher, like the pastor, had a "responsibility as a servant, not as a lord, or as a second lord, probably at variance with the first one; he has it as a teacher, not as a pastor, and, therefore, does not have the same responsibility as a pastor."⁸¹ Simply put, Stellhorn saw the relationship of the two offices as both being parts of the public ministry. Both had their particular authority and obligations assigned to them, and had their particular and general responsibilities toward the congregation and toward God. Within Stellhorn's framework, both offices worked toward the same end and both possessed the highest function of the ministry--the preaching and teaching of God's Word. It was imperative, therefore, that there be "a close-knit cooperation and brotherly harmony" between the two.⁸²

⁷⁹ Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 13.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 12.

Stellhorn's views on the relationship between pastor and teacher did not end here. During much of Stellhorn's tenure as Secretary of Schools, the call document (or Diploma of Vocation) for Lutheran teachers contained a provision which subjected teachers "to work under the supervision of the pastor and the board of education."⁸³ He recognized that because of the nature and responsibility of the pastoral office, it was understandable that the pastor would be "naturally and officially interested in all the functions of the congregation's ministry," including "the functions of the teacher."⁸⁴ However, Stellhorn did not see this to mean that "the pastor should 'supervise' the teacher or the school."⁸⁵ Using the rationale in reverse, he wrote:

. . . the teacher, because of his own responsibility, which in the final analysis is a responsibility for the congregation, is naturally and officially interested in all the functions of the congregation's ministry, and hence in all the functions of the pastor, even as every

⁸³Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 15. The pastor's role in supervising teachers stemmed from the early decades of the Missouri Synod when there was no question about the teaching role of the pastor. Most calls insisted that the pastor teach as well as preach until a qualified schoolteacher could be called to that parish. Many pastors jealously guarded their roles as head teachers and took their teaching seriously, even after the appointment of a permanent school teacher. In these instances, the office of the pastor became that of superintendent of the school, a role adopted from their German fathers. The pastor was responsible for supervision of doctrine in the church and in the school. Teachers were examined by pastors and employed only with their approval.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 14.

⁸⁵Ibid.

member of the Church should be interested. Yet, this does not mean that the teacher should "supervise" the pastor and his activities.⁸⁶

Taking a compromise position, Stelhorn asserted that on an informal level, "pastor and teacher are supervising each other all the time, and the congregation is supervising both of them" ⁸⁷ He recommended that if one or the other in this informal supervisory relationship finds something that needs correction or improvement, he should speak to the other about it. If everything is properly done, then they should praise each other.⁸⁸ Stelhorn believed that formal supervision could not achieve anything greater "without transgressing the law of love, assuming legalistic powers (which are absent from the Church), and creating discord."⁸⁹

For the most part, Stelhorn's aggressiveness in stating his case for the Lutheran teacher's ministerial status was reserved for male teachers only. As was indicated in Chapter IV, the male-supremacy reflected in his view of the husband-wife relationship was augmented by the Synodical teaching that woman was created for man, to be a helpmate for him, and that he was to rule over her. This perspective is carried over into Stelhorn's view on

⁸⁶Ibid.

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 15.

committing the office of the ministry to women. As was indicated earlier, Stellhorn believed that in a general sense the ministry of the Church (e.g., the preaching and teaching of God's Word) was the business of every member of the congregation, regardless of age or sex. True to his Missouri Synod theology, however, Stellhorn believed that in the case of a woman, "her services in the ministry of the congregation and of the Church generally are greatly limited by sex."⁹⁰ These limitations, according to Stellhorn, were prescribed in Scripture.⁹¹ Stellhorn apparently based these limitations on the words of the Apostle Paul found in 1 Corinthians 13:34-35: "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are commanded to be under obedience" Luther's interpretation of these words was that women were barred from the public ministry by the Holy Ghost. Consequently, to this day (even though it is a theological issue within Lutheranism generally) the Missouri Synod has steadfastly adhered to the belief that the office of the ministry may not be committed to women. In other words, they teach that Scripture gave women an equal share with men in salvation, but does not abrogate the social order nor the Apostle Paul's divinely inspired limitations. As Stellhorn once put it: "There is said to be but one regularly ordained woman

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 12.

⁹¹ Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 9.

preacher in Germany--just one too many."⁹²

This hardline position is tempered somewhat when Stellhorn, in writing about the woman teacher's call, indicated that "Her call is just as divine as that of a pastor, male teacher, professor, and any other public minister of the Church" ⁹³ It was just that a woman was "limited by Holy Scripture to certain functions in the Church on account of being a woman, and she is limited also as a teacher."⁹⁴ Lest he be accused of heresy, it should be pointed out that Stellhorn was still consistent here with traditional Missouri Synod theology which teaches, (based upon the Apostle Paul calling a woman, Phebe, "a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea" [Rom. 16:1]), that woman teachers in parochial schools and deaconesses in Synodical congregations are also servants of the church, doing some work that lies within the office of the ministry, and under the supervision of the pastor. This teaching does not grant the full office of the ministry to women. Stellhorn interpreted the Scriptural limitations upon women as restricting her ministerial service "to children and women,

⁹² August C. Stellhorn, ed., "News Service," Lutheran School Journal 61 (June 1926): 236.

⁹³ August C. Stellhorn, "The Woman Teacher's Call--An Explanation," Board for Parish Education Bulletin (November 1954): 4-5.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 5.

so far as teaching and training are concerned."⁹⁵ In spite of these limitations, Stellhorn reminded the Synod that the Lutheran woman teachers' "office . . . is created by God through His Church and she . . . is chosen by God through His Church."⁹⁶

In sum, Stellhorn recognized the Lutheran school teacher as an active participant in the public ministry of the Church. While he was not a pastor per se, the scope and function of his office was entirely consistent with that of the ministry of the Church; namely, to preach and teach the Word of God in all its truth and purity. Even though Scripture limited the woman teacher's ministerial status, it by no means negated the divinity of her call. Stellhorn recognized that there were forces against recognizing teachers officially as ministers within Synod, but in fatherly fashion, salved some of the hurt when he called on Synodical teachers "not to pay too much attention to what people call you or your office. Be convinced in your own mind that you are a true minister of God and His Church"⁹⁷ At least minimally, then, one's public ministry was to be a mindset.

There is little question that August C. Stellhorn's

⁹⁵ Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," p. 12.

⁹⁶ Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher in the Ministry of the Church," p. 10.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 12.

mindset viewed his nearly fifty-six years of active service to The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod as a public ministry, in behalf of all and especially in behalf of Lutheran parochial education and the dignity of the Lutheran teacher's office. This study has attempted to bring to the forefront some of Stellanor's educational thought as it manifested itself through a large portion of his public service as minister. It is to a summation and evaluation of his educational thinking that the following, and final, chapter of this study now turns.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study has been to identify, discuss, and assess the educational ideas of August C. Stellhorn, Secretary of Schools for The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod for nearly forty years, who was an aggressive spokesman for the cause of Lutheran parochial education. The writer believes that Stellhorn's ideas need to be examined against the backdrop of contemporary Lutheran education.

Since the late 1960's, the Missouri Synod has been in the throes of a bitter struggle that has its roots in differing theological viewpoints. A concomitant "identity crisis" within the Synod further indicates that a sense of doctrinal unanimity and purpose is being eroded.¹ The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod may no longer be clear on what it is or what its mission should be. To a degree, the

¹The struggle peaked at the Missouri Synod's 1971 New Orleans convention when the conservative element wrested political control from the more liberal forces in the church. The theological dispute had been fermenting for years, but after 1971 it erupted into a power struggle between the two camps. While media coverage has painted the picture of a political and power war, the factions essentially disagree on interpretation of Scripture. The conservative element adheres to a strict literal view of the Bible while the so-called "moderate" (liberal) element tends to question the inerrancy of Holy Writ.

Synod's parochial school system is also experiencing a similar "identity crisis." Consequently, the preceding chapters in this study have attempted to illuminate Lutheran education's uniqueness by examining the educational ideas of Dr. August C. Stellhorn, whose career provided a basis for a distinctively Lutheran educational perspective. Stellhorn's conception of Lutheran education's history, purposes, curriculum, instructional methodology, and the teaching ministry have been examined in relationship to his religious orientation.

Stellhorn devoted his entire professional life to Lutheran parochial education. From 1921 to 1963, the years examined in this study, he labored to promote Lutheran schools in the United States as the Missouri Synod's first Secretary of Schools. It is the promotional dimension of his work that provides the key to assessing Stellhorn's educational ideas.

In his promotion of Lutheran parochial education, Stellhorn worked from a distinctively Missouri Synod theological foundation and perspective. While neither systematic nor definitive as a theologian, Stellhorn's religious beliefs adhered to a strict Missouri Synod orthodoxy which sought to conserve divine truth as he perceived it.

Stellhorn's conservative theology is readily apparent in his writing of educational history. In his historical writing, Stellhorn was consistently influenced by

a speculative philosophy that saw the evolution of Lutheran parochial schools as the benevolent handiwork of God. Specifically, the growth and development of Lutheran parochial education was a manifestation of God's wonderful grace and mercy.

In addition, Stellschorn's role as a Lutheran school promoter caused him to use Synodical educational history for its inspirational value. As he sold the concept of Lutheran parochial education, Stellschorn's history revealed a parochial celebrationism that occasionally tainted his interpretation of the growth of the historic ideal of his beloved Lutheran parish school.

The merging of Stellschorn's providential speculative philosophy with his tendencies to celebrate historical events, explains his less than critical approach to educational history. His assessment that Walther's signature on the document known as "Stephan's Investiture" was a forgery is a good case in point.

Lest we become overly critical, it should be remembered that Stellschorn's educational training did not go beyond two years of a normal school background. He was not trained as a professional historian and his amateurish tendencies need to be placed in that perspective. In spite of his historiographical weaknesses, Stellschorn did contribute to the writing of Lutheran history. His prolific historical writing provides a great deal of information and a rich mine for contemporary historians interested in

Synodical educational history.

Central to the purposes of this study is Stellhorn's conception of the purposes of Lutheran education. Here again his religious orientation provides the foundation. It will be remembered that Stellhorn's definition of purpose focused specifically on the pupil becoming a true Christian. To that end, education was primarily a matter of service to man's soul. Stellhorn believed that the goal of true Christianity could be achieved through experiencing a true education--one that eventuated in man becoming a true Christian because of a continual contact with positive Christian influences and the ensuing conquest over evil influences which would only result in degradation or corruption (his antithesis to true education). To achieve a controlled climate of positive Christian influences, Stellhorn envisioned a synthesis of educative agencies--the Christian home, the Christian church, and the Christian school. Reflecting Martin Luther, Stellhorn believed that the home was the most powerful educational agency. Regardless, each agency had but two purposes--the pleasure and glory of God and the restoration of man to his original state of perfection. To facilitate the achievement of these broad goals, Stellhorn argued for four concomitant purposes of a Lutheran parochial education--Christian training (e.g., nurture and admonition), indoctrination, providing a general education, and mission outreach.

Stellhorn's religious orthodoxy dictated definite

convictions about the goal of a Christian Lutheran education and it was within this context that he exercised his promotional role. As Secretary of Schools for the Missouri Synod, Stellhorn was a stalwart, sincere partisan for Lutheran parochial education. Seemingly, it made no difference to him whether his advocacy occurred in circles where the school idea was popular or unpopular. Stellhorn believed in schools above any other Church agency (e.g., the Sunday School, the Saturday School, etc.) of Christian education. Together, the home and the Lutheran school could do the job.

For the most part, Stellhorn's promotional rhetoric appeared to gain supporters and strengthened the schools. This is evidenced by increased enrollments, and a growing number of teachers, classrooms, and buildings. Of course, larger societal factors probably also contributed to these increases, but an examination of this topic would have to be reserved for another study. Suffice it to say that his advocacy of Lutheran schools as the only adequate Church agency of Christian education brought them to the fore and made people think about them. Perhaps Stellhorn's most significant contribution to Lutheran education was this: he did not let people forget about the Lutheran parochial school and its importance.

Stellhorn's promotional activities exposed him to criticism. In his zeal for advocating his view that the home and the school (as an agency of the Church) could carry

on the task of Christian education together, he overlooked two very practical aspects of the situation: (1) Regardless of the rightness of his viewpoint, many people could not or would not send their children to Lutheran schools; (2) Many homes were (and still are) not equipped for giving children a proper Christian environment and education and some parents did (and do) not care. Thus many children did not receive the kind of education that Stellanor advocated.

This writer certainly believes that if we had nothing but solid Christian homes and good Christian schools for all children, and if we could tie them all together in the Christian Church (e.g., Stellanor's educative synthesis of agencies), nothing could surpass this combination for child rearing. In other words, we believe Stellanor to be correct in this. Unfortunately, in an imperfect world and an imperfect Church we must use every possible means to bring children under the Word of God. If a school is not possible or practical, the church must use whatever agency it can to bring as much instruction to children as they can absorb or as much as they are willing to accept. If the home is inadequate and there is no school, it is at least worthwhile to get children into the "part-time" agencies such as the Sunday School (something that Stellanor would probably not accept). In other words, we must use whatever means we can. With this viewpoint we can emphasize Christian education instead of agencies (such as Stellanor did with the parochial school), and we may lead a child from

a lesser agency (e.g., the Sunday School) to a more adequate one (e.g., the parochial school). Certainly Stellhorn was sound in his assessment of the school and the home, but he could have given more credit to less satisfactory (though also important) alternatives.

Another disconcerting aspect of Stellhorn's view of the agencies and purposes of Lutheran education was his zeal for promoting Lutheran education at the expense of public education. As he argued for the concomitant purpose of indoctrination, time and time again Stellhorn displayed a provincialism that indicated that he wanted nothing to do with the evil secularism that he perceived permeating American public schooling. To be fair, this narrowness must be put into proper perspective.

Stellhorn's German Missouri Synod Lutheran background explains, in part, the narrow provincialism he displayed in this sphere. Even a cursory reading of Synodical history clearly manifests a tendency on the part of Missouri Synod Lutheranism to insulate itself from the wider society. Historically, the German Lutheran parish was an enclave designed to protect its members from both the influences of Americanization as well as from any challenge to its strict Biblical orthodoxy. Stellhorn merely reflected the climate in which he was raised. Then, too, many other Synodical leaders reflected the same provincialism during the period of Stellhorn's ministry to the Church.

Lest the impression be given that Stelhorn's provincialism had as its only source the congregational enclave, it should be remembered that when he took office in 1921 as Secretary of Schools, at least twenty years of legislation directed against Lutheran and Roman Catholic schools had transpired.² Stelhorn spent his first years in office combating a secular provincialism that he viewed as a distinct threat to his valued educational agency--the Lutheran parish school. It would appear that such adverse legislation tainted Stelhorn's objectivity and consequently his advocacy of Lutheran schools was sometimes at the expense of public schools which were the recipients of the benefits of the anti-parochial school laws.

It also appears that Stelhorn feared the public school as a competitor of his revered parochial school. His campaign for creating parish schools would have been less effective if public schools were too accessible. Consequently, it would then be inconvenient for parents and congregations to open parish schools.

In spite of Stelhorn's impractical prioritizing of the agency of the Lutheran school and his provincial lack of objectivity relating to the public school, there was a

²As discussed in Chapter I, this legislation generally attempted to abolish the use of foreign languages and require English as the only medium of instruction in private and parochial schools as well as public schools. It was felt that many of these laws contained hidden agendas--the destruction of all private and parochial schools.

definite direction in his conception of the purposes of Lutheran education. This direction was unique in that it was premised on Stellanor's distinctly orthodox Missouri Synod interpretation of Scripture as well as upon Martin Luther's educational emphases. Whether one agrees with Stellanor or not, there can be no question that he did not suffer from an "identity crisis." Stellanor's concept of the Lutheran school was founded upon a unanimity of doctrine and purpose. He was clear on what the Lutheran school was and what its mission should be: it was to serve the soul and work toward the pleasure and glory of God and the restoration of man to his original state of perfection.

Stellanor's religious orthodoxy appears to have been translated into a rather conservative view of the curriculum and methods to be employed in a Lutheran school. His views about curriculum were neither systematic nor definitive, but they did reflect his religious orientation. Because what was taught in a Lutheran school was to reflect its purpose, religion assumed a primary position in Stellanor's curricular scheme. It was this subject that would eventually cause a child to become a true Christian; its study was certainly consistent with the two broad purposes of Lutheran education.

While the study of religion was the heart and core of the curriculum, Stellanor believed that a broad general education was also part of the Lutheran school's course of study. To that end the common branches of learning (e.g.,

reading, history, geography, etc.) were also studied, but always from a uniquely Christian Lutheran perspective.

As with his concept of the Lutheran school curriculum, Stellhorn's methodological musings were neither systematic nor definitive. One thing appears to be certain: he was conservative in his pedagogical approaches. In fact, after sifting through much of his verbiage about methodology, it becomes quite apparent that Stellhorn valued the catechetical (question-and-answer) approach above all others.

It is difficult to assess the reason for Stellhorn's general conservatism in both the curricular and methodological spheres. Certainly his theological orthodoxy contributed to it. Because of Progressive education's emphasis on relative truth, Stellhorn was also suspicious of other pedagogical doctrines, such as a child-centered curriculum and the project method. A more plausible explanation might be his implied affinity to the essentialist educational camp. Stellhorn's concept of the curriculum centered on having the child learn things which God commanded and that man's experience found to be proper and right. Consistent with essentialism's perspective, Stellhorn was little concerned with what the child might be inclined to want to learn. Similarly, Stellhorn accepted the essentialistic negation of problem solving or socialized learning and instead believed that instructional strategies should provide for rigorous, systematic learning of the

essentials. Perhaps it is both Stellhorn's theological orthodoxy as well as his essentialistic affinity that explains his curricular and methodological conservatism.

Stellhorn's limited theoretical grounding in the curricular and methodological arena need not be unmercifully criticized. He was, after all, a school administrator and promoter, not a curriculum or instructional theoretician. Stellhorn's lack of depth and breadth can be compared most favorably to such outstanding figures in the history of American public education as Horace Mann and Henry Barnard.³ To peruse their educational writings for systematic statements on curriculum and methodology is to reveal the same propensity for commenting on much, but saying very little. Like Stellhorn, both were school administrators and promoters.

While the argument that Stellhorn may have been leading a teacher power movement in the Synod is debatable, there can be no question that his writings concerning the ministry of the Lutheran teacher were an obvious attempt to

³Horace Mann (1796-1859) and Henry Barnard (1811-1900) were both lawyers and members of state legislatures working toward educational reforms. Later, both became state school superintendents--Mann in Massachusetts and Barnard in Connecticut. Well known for his writing, Mann's literary legacy includes the Common School Journal which was a powerful factor in informing and influencing the public of Massachusetts on educational matters. A bit more prolific, Barnard is remembered for his Connecticut Common School Journal, the Journal of the Rhode Island Institute of Education, and especially for the American Journal of Education. Henry Barnard later became the first United States Commissioner of Education (1867-1870).

provide dignity to an office that he perceived as lacking in status. Next to his promotional campaign for the historic ideal of the Lutheran parochial school, Stellhorn's conception of the Lutheran teacher in ministry may be his most important educational legacy.

Stellhorn once again fell back upon his religious orientation in battling for the dignity of the teacher's office. The Lutheran school teacher was an active participant in the public ministry of the Church because, as Stellhorn understood Scripture, the scope and function of the teacher's office was entirely compatible with the ministry of the Church--preaching and teaching the Word of God. His belief that the ordination of male teachers would not be in violation of the fundamental doctrinal tenets of Synodical orthodoxy was courageous to say the least. Always the school promoter, Stellhorn realized that arguing too vociferously for this rite would alienate a significant power base in the Missouri Synod--the parish pastors. Consequently, the practical expediency of keeping school support at the local congregational level took precedence over too militant a stance regarding the office of the teacher.

Stellhorn was not quite as aggressive when attempting to dignify the ministerial role of the woman teacher in the Missouri Synod. Here, he reflected his fundamental orthodoxy once again. Stellhorn could not ignore the Scriptural limitations that he believed God had

placed upon woman, especially the principle that the ministerial office could not be committed to women. In spite of these constraints, Stelhorn's advocacy of the teacher's office did view women as possessing a call to serve the Church that was just as divine as any call held by men. For both men and women occupying the teacher's office, Stelhorn indicated that ministry was perhaps more of a state of mind than the affixing of a title.

This study's attempt to further illuminate Lutheran educational history through viewing the educational ideas of August C. Stelhorn points toward a need on the part of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod to address some pivotal issues. Stelhorn's educational thought was distinctively Missouri Synod Lutheran and grounded solidly in orthodox Biblical theology. His Scripturally based conception of the agencies and purposes of a Lutheran education argue convincingly that the effectiveness of Lutheran education stems from the child being under the total influence of the parish. For Stelhorn, the enclave provided a true education and the synthesis of effort between home-church-school was the power behind the effective formation of young Christians. Unfortunately, Stelhorn's orthodox Lutheran theology and concomitant educational viewpoint reflected a provincialism that, if carried to an extreme, could result in the Church's educative agencies (especially the Lutheran school) becoming so insulated that the preaching and teaching of God's Word would cease to be

effective outside the enclave.

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod is currently going through a period of doctrinal retrenchment. Can it regain a unanimity of doctrine and purpose such as that reflected in the ideas of August Stellanor? Achieving this, can the Missouri Synod maintain the school-home-church enclave that Stellanor promoted, and can it articulate the unique educational purposes stemming from its orthodox Biblical theology? Is such a unique enclave possible without the congregations of Synod insulating themselves from the rest of society? In other words, how can the Lutheran school retain and maintain its distinctively Scriptural foundation and still not turn away from an extroverted position? The answers to these questions may very well breathe life into or mark the doom of Christian Lutheran education.

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

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